

The best-selling RISC OS magazine in the world

ACORNUSER

Get netted

*What you need to make
the most of the Web*

RISCOS Ltd
Read the truth inside

Linux News

**£300
worth of games
on this issue's CD**

- The real home computer
- Myth II revealed
- The latest Linux news

Plus

- Netplex reviewed
- New Web plug-ins
- Going faster with the Kinetic

tau
PRESS

ISSUE 223 AUGUST 2000



08 >

9 771471 100001

£4.20



CASTLE

The
cool
way
to
surf

Oregano

The new RISC OS
web browser from



CASTLE

Order now!

ONLY
£49 + vat

Download a FREE trial version from

www.castle.org.uk/oregano/

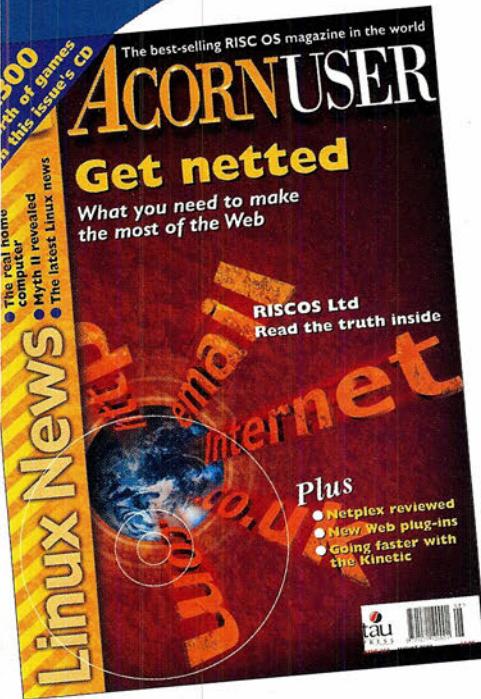
or call 01728 723200
Freefax 0800 783 9638

Castle Technology Ltd, Ore Trading Estate,
Woodbridge Road, Framlingham, Suffolk IP13 9LL UK
email: sales@castle.org.uk www.castle.org.uk
E&OE

contents

August 2000

ACORNUSER



Features

- 31 Creating newsgroups
- 32 AUCD10
- 48 Installing and using the KINETIC card.

Published by



26 Stockport Village, Hooper Street,

Stockport SK1 1DQ

e-mail: enquiries@acornuser.com

<http://www.acornuser.com/>

Tel: (0161) 429 8902 Fax: (0161) 429 0685

Printed by The Manson Group Ltd, St Albans

Editor Steve Turnbull

Emergency Editorial Hologram David Matthewman
Production Consultant Alan Jones

Contributors

Mike Cook, David Dade, Alan Gibson, Richard Goodwin, Andrew Green, Richard Jane, Paul Johnson, Ben Levens, Jonathan Masters, Teri Paul, John Pettigrew, Jill Regan, Francis Richards, Pam Turnbull, Paul Vigay

Finance Manager Gary Duxbury
Distribution COMAG (01895) 444055

Deputy Managing Director Steve Turnbull
Managing Director Sharon Henderson

Subscriptions:
0870 0600424

E-mail: subscribe@acornuser.com
13 issue subscription rate: £45.99 (UK), £51.99 (EU), £63.99 (World)

Copyright © 2000 Tau Press Ltd

No material may be reproduced in whole or in part without written permission. While every care is taken, the publishers cannot be held legally responsible for any errors in articles, listings or advertisements and the views of contributors do not necessarily reflect the views of the publishers

Acorn User is available as speech from the Talking Newspaper Association UK

Internet Services provided by Argonet, www.argonet.co.uk

Reviews

- 22 Netplex
- 32 SVG & audio Web plug-ins
- 45 DrawWorks New Millennium
- 55 Overload
- 56 Music on the RiscStation

Regulars

- 6 News
- 13 Getting steamed
- 15 Comms
- 17 Public domain
- 21 Graphics page
- 58 Free ads
- 61 Education news
- 62 Education reviews
- 65 Rambles
- 68 Subscriptions
- 68 Back Issues
- 70 Advertisers' index
- 72 Letters
- 74 Regan files

Linux User

- 02 Linux News
- 04 Adomo
- 06 Myth 2



By the time you read this I will have returned from my Mencap charity ride in China, along with my trusty A4 and a digital camera; in fact you'll be able to read all about it in the next issue. As I write this, my plane leaves in 12 hours.

The Chinese have a curse: 'May you live in interesting times'. Curiously it's not something I've ever considered to be a curse, in fact to live in uninteresting times would be the worst curse of all.

Interesting things are going on in our market right now. Some may see them as bad things but the bad things are gone; their results are becoming noticeable by being exposed to the light of day.

The fact is that RISC OS is standing at yet another crux, it's another 'up or down?' point in time. You will soon be asked to put yourself out for the computer platform that you have chosen for yourself. The platform that is British through and through, doesn't pander to idiots, and provides greater productivity than any other currently known.

There comes a time when you must take real action. While nobody is going to ask you to stand in the front rank of the advancing infantry, it can sometimes feel like that, when you stand up and say 'we've got something good' and the naysayers come crawling around, whining about how bad it all is really.

Well let's just remember: we *do* have something good. Something very good – new, fresh and interesting – and it's time to make it known to the rest of the world.

We live in interesting times, but it's not a curse, it's going to be fun. Join in and enjoy it!

Steve Turnbull
Editor

September issue on
sale 3rd August 2000

0% Interest FREE credit (6 months)

or LOW cost finance or leasing on all new systems

inc. peripherals, software & 2/3 yr optional warranties (min. deposit 10%)

RiscStation 1999 2000

RISC OS compatible products for the new Millennium



neTWORK

neTWORK HD

Complete systems from under £5.30 / week

Networx base from only £399 + Vat (£468.83)

L.C. Finance £15.32 / month

Networx HD base only £449 + Vat (£527.57)

L.C. Finance £17.24 / month

(monitors extra e.g. i.e. 15" system £499 + VAT) Finance £19.16 / month ring for more details
50 mip Arm7500 system with 8Mb memory, (HD version 2GB HD min.) built in ZIP drive support, Midi support, 3D sound, & sampler support, 10baseT port as standard, RISCOS 4 as standard, High speed serial, High speed parallel, expandable to 256Mb memory & hard drive / CD-ROM etc.



RiscStation Lite R7500

RiscStation Lite R7500+

RiscStation Lite base from £499 + Vat (£586.33)

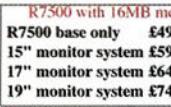
L.C. Finance £19.16 / month

RiscStation Lite+ base from £579 + Vat (£680.33)

L.C. Finance £22.23 / month

Over £500 worth of FREE SOFTWARE

50 mip Arm7500 system with minimum 16Mb memory, 4Gb hard drive, 48x CD-ROM, built in ZIP drive support, Midi support, 3D sound, & sampler support, 80w speakers, 10baseT port standard, RISCOS 4 as standard, High speed serial, High speed parallel, expandable to 256Mb memory.



Also available the LitePlus with 64MB / 10.2GB HD
R7500 base only £499 + Vat (£586.33) (£19.16)
15" monitor system £599 + Vat (£703.83) (£22.99)
17" monitor system £649 + Vat (£762.58) (£24.91)
19" monitor system £749 + Vat (£880.08) (£28.75)

LitePlus Base only £579 + Vat (£680.33) (£22.23)
LitePlus 15" system £679 + Vat (£797.83) (£26.06)
LitePlus 17" system £729 + Vat (£856.58) (£27.98)
LitePlus 19" system £829 + Vat (£974.08) (£31.82)

Internet Packs from £85 + VAT (£99.88)

available for all machines include Internet software, ISP setup and 56K modem



SCORCHER

The R7500 Scorcher from RiscStation arrives with a quality CD ROM Reader/ReWriter and media. Using the acclaimed CDBurn suite the Scorcher provides a brilliant CD mastering platform for home users.

Scorcher base from

£769 + Vat (£903.58)

£29 month £799 + Vat (£938.82) £30.67 month

Scorcher Twindeck base from

£799 + Vat (£938.82) £30.67 month

Latest variant StrongArm series machine

Kinetic RiscPC from £999 + VAT

70MB, 10GB HD, 40xCD (£38.39 /month)

Kinetic Internet RiscPC £1,199 + VAT

138MB, 30GB HD, 40xCD (£38.39 /month)

(includes internet pack)



Acorn



SA 233 RiscPC from £860 inc VAT £28.10 L.C.F/month

SA Web Wizard £999 + VAT (inc. RISC OS 4)

34Mb / 8G / 40x CD-ROM / 56K modem & Internet Software (monitor extra). **On L.C.F. only £42.19 / month**

We can supply any combination or configuration you require.
& we will match or beat your best offer

A7000 + Series

A7000+ Classic 29 Mips RO3.7 8M / 1G HD / no CD	£449.00 (£527.58) (£17.24)
A7000+ Classic 29 Mips RO3.7 16M / 2G HD / 24x CD	£499.00 (£586.33) (£19.16)
A7000+ Odyssey NETWORK 50 Mips RO3.7 16M	£499.00 (£468.82) (£19.16)
A7000+ Odyssey NETWORK 50 Mips RO4.0 16M	£449.00 (£527.58) (£17.24)
A7000+ Odyssey CD 50 Mips RO3.7 (4.0) 16M / 4G HD / 40x CD	£54.99 (£645.08) (£21.07)
A7000+ Odyssey Primary 50 Mips RO3.7 (4.0) 16M / 4G HD / 40x CD	£599.00 (£703.83) (£22.99)
A7000+ Odyssey Secondary 50 Mips RO3.7 (4.0) 16M / 4G HD / 40x CD	£599.00 (£703.83) (£22.99)
A7000+ Odyssey Surf 50 Mips RO3.7 (4.0) 16M / 4G / 40x CD	£599.00 (£703.83) (£22.99)

Above prices do not include monitors please see separate price list

Tel : 01942 797777

Fax : 01942 797711

Check with **CTA DIRECT** for the **BEST** prices in the **RISCOS** world. (Even against alleged trade only suppliers).

Kinetic (64MB) upgrades

New SA upgrade using SDRAM

Processor card (inc RO4)	£399.00 (£468.82)
Trade-Up 1 (from SA & RO4)	£299.00 (£351.32)
Trade-Up 2 (from RO4 only)	£349.00 (£410.07)
Trade-Up 2 (from SA & RO3.7)	£349.00 (£410.07)
128MB version extra £69.00 (£81.08)	

3.5" IDE Hard Drives

	Ex VAT	Inc VAT
210Mb	£25.00	£29.37
250Mb	£30.00	£35.25
420Mb	£40.00	£47.00
500Mb	£49.00	£57.58
2.1Gb #	£60.00	£70.50
4.3Gb #	£65.00	£76.37
10.2Gb *	£79.00	£92.83
15.3Gb *	£89.00	£104.57
20.1Gb *	£95.00	£111.62
30.5Gb *	£115.00	£135.12
40.9Gb *	£170.00	£199.75

requires RISCOS 3.6 / 3.7 * requires RISCOS 4 or Partitioning s/w for only £25.00 + vat

SCSI HARD DRIVES

1Gb	£50.00	(£58.75)
2Gb (7200 rpm)	£90.00	(£105.75)
4.3Gb (5400 or 7200 rpm)	£125.00	(£146.88)
9.1Gb (7200 rpm)	£155.00	(£182.12)
18.6Gb (7200 rpm)	£240.00	(£282.00)
36.4Gb (7200 rpm)	£499.00	(£586.32)
For EXT. SCSI I case £50.00 + VAT (inc. cable)		
For EXT. Dual SCSI I case £65.00 + VAT (inc. cable)		
For EXT. SCSI II case £55.00 + VAT (inc. cable)		

IDE driver for Risc OS 3.5 £15 + vat IDE int. fitting kit £5 inc. Int. SCSI fitting kit from £10 +

CD-ROM WRITERS

Prices Start from £139.00 +

"ScorchIT" CD Writer Pack

Upgrade your R7500 Lite or Lite Plus with a home CD authoring package as found in the RiscStation SCORCHER machine. This package contains the latest version of CD Burn, Writable and ReWritable media to get you started and one powerful CD ROM Writer/ Rewriter (minimum 4x4x24).

only £199 + Vat (£233.83)

RPC "ScorchIT" CD Writer Pack inc. I/F only £239 + Vat (£280.83)

4x4x16x Yamaha	£139.00	(£163.33)
6x4x16x Yamaha	£169.00	(£198.58)
6x4x24x Memorex	£189.00	(£222.08)
CD-BURN	£49.00	(£57.58)
CD-SCRIBE 2	£49.00	(£57.58)

CD-ROMS

SCSI 8x Autochanger £75.00 + vat (£88.13)

SCSI IDE

48x	£39.00 (£45.83)	40x	£65.00 (£76.38)
40x	£35.00 (£41.13)	16x	£40.00 (£47.00)
8x	£30.00 (£35.25)	8x	£30.00 (£35.25)

IDE driver for Risc OS 3.5 £15 + vat IDE int. fitting kit £5 inc. Int. SCSI fitting kit from £10 +

External CD ROMs

40x CD Tower (6 SCSI drives) with space for HD £449 + VAT

40x IDE (with cable) £85 + VAT

8x SCSI I (with cable) £85 + VAT

40x SCSI I (with cable) £115 + VAT

40x SCSI II (with cable) £120 + VAT

COLOUR SCSI SCANNERS



P'lel Mustek 600dpi £99.00 £116.32

Mustek A4 600dpi £119.00 £139.83

Mustek A4 1200dpi £149.00 £175.08

Epson GT7000 £199.00 £233.83

Epson GT7000P £249.00 £292.57

Epson Perfection £212.00 £249.10

Epson Perfection P £275.00 £323.12

ImageM & Twain also available separately

Interface Adapters

ESEXO SCSI 32-bit DMA £109.00 £128.08

Storm SCSI 8-bit (A30x9 int) £88.00 £103.40

Storm SCSI 16-bit (podule) £96.00 £112.80

Storm SCSI 32-bit DMA (podule) £128.00 £150.40

Simtec 8-bit (A3000/A3010) £55.00 £64.83

Simtec 16-bit (AX000/A5000/RPC) £45.00 £52.88

APDL 16-bit DMA £45.00 £52.88

APDL Blitz 32-bit DMA £99.00 £116.33

Removable IDE or SCSI housing £20.00 £23.50

High speed serial cards single £67.23 £79.00

High speed serial cards dual £75.75 £89.00

High speed serial cards triple £84.26 £99.00

Desktop FAX MODEMS

56k x2/V90 3Com USR £99.00 £116.32

56k Flex/V90 (Rockwell) £49.00 £57.58

56k V90 Internal for RIS £49.00 £57.58

ISDN modem (external) £79.00 £92.83

ANT Internet Suite £110.00 £129.25

Webster XL £21.26 £25.00

Messenger Pro £25.53 £30.00

Java CD £33.19 £39.00

AcFax Fax software £26.38 £31.00

3 yr Warranty on ALL Acorn MEMORY why Pay More??

NEW LOWER PRICES

	Ex VAT	Inc VAT
A310 4Mb Upgrade	£35	£41.13
A310 RISC OS carrier board	£19	£22.33
A310 MEMC1a upgrade kit	£20	£23.50
A400/1 1Mb Upgrade (per Mb)	£25	£29.38
A3000 1-2Mb Non-Upgradeable	£15	£17.63
A3000 1-4Mb Upgrade	£35	£41.13
A3000 Serial Port Upgrade	£19	£22.33
4-8Mb Up. (A310, 440, 3000*)	£55	£64.63
A3010 1-2Mb Upgrade	£20	£23.50
A3010 1-4Mb Upgrade	£45	£52.88
A3020/4000 2-4Mb Upgrade	£40	£47.00
A5000 2-4Mb Upgrade	£45	£52.88
A5000 4-8Mb 25MHz & 33MHz	£55	£64.63
NEW A540 4Mb	£45	£52.88
FPA10 for A5000 or Arm 3 Card	£45	£52.88
Replacement VIDC or IOC chips	£20	£23.50
* rework if required	£25	£29.38

Risc OS 3.11 Rom upgrades
£25.00 exc Vat (£29.38)

RISCOS MEMORY check latest prices

Also for A7000/RS	Ex VAT	Inc VAT
8Mb SIMM	£10.00	£11.75
16Mb SIMM	£20.00	£23.50
32Mb SIMM EDO	£42.00	£49.35
32Mb SIMM FPM	£49.00	£57.58
32Mb high clearance	£59.00	£69.33
64Mb SIMM EDO	£65.00	£76.37
128Mb SIMM from	£130.00	£152.75
1Mb VRAM	£25.00	£29.37
2Mb VRAM	£75.00	£88.12
1-2Mb (exchange)	£65.00	£76.37
128 PC133 (Kinetic)	£79.00	£92.83
64 PC133 (Kinetic)	£42.00	£49.35

33 Mhz Arm 3 upgrade SPECIAL

with FPA socket £45.00 £55.88 inc.
FPA 10 (25Mhz) £84.26 £99.00 inc.

NETWORKING

ETHERNET INTERFACES

Ex. VAT	Inc VAT
A3000 int. 10base2 or T, Access+	£89.00 £104.58
A400/A5000 10base2 or T Access+	£89.00 £104.58
A400/A5000 10base2 & T Access+	£99.00 £116.33
A3020 10base2 Access+ext. MAU	£94.00 £110.45
A3020 10baseT Access+ext. MAU	£94.00 £110.45
Risc PC/A7000 10base2 & T Acc+	£99.00 £116.33
Risc PC/A7000 10base2 Access+	£79.00 £92.83
Ant Access + ROM upgrade	£10.00 £11.75

Cables

2M	£3.00	£3.53
3M	£5.00	£5.88
5M	£6.00	£7.05
10M	£10.00	£11.75
20M	£15.00	£17.63

State 10base2 or 10baseT
any size made to order

We supply and / or install all
network components please
ring for your requirements

NETWORKING SOFTWARE

Topcat site licence	£489.00 (£528.75)
NTfile site licence	£97.00 (£113.88)
Omniclient site licence	£489.00 (£527.50)
Lanman98 single user	£35.00 (£41.13)
Win95FS single user	£35.00 (£41.13)
Lanman or Win95FS 10 user site licence	£110.00 £129.25
Lanman or Win95FS 20 user site licence	£156.00 £183.30

Network Specials

TOPCAT Site licence £450 (£528.75)
!Browse Site Licence £170 (£199.75)
(Offers available while special stocks last)

ARCSHARE

Acorn networking for PCs
£29.95 exc Vat £35.19 inc Vat

HARD DRIVES / SUB-SYSTEMS

Ex VAT	Inc VAT	Ex VAT	Inc VAT
60/80MB	£39.00	£45.83	£97.00
170MB	£49.00	£57.58	£89.00 £104.57
340MB	£59.00	£69.33	£99.00 £116.33
500MB	£79.00	£92.83	£119.00 £139.83
810MB #	£99.00	£116.32	£125.00 £146.87
1.0Gb #	£109.00	£128.08	£134.00 £157.45
2.1Gb #	£123.00	£144.53	£149.00 £175.08
3.2Gb #	£129.00	£151.58	£155.00 £182.12
4.3Gb #	£149.00	£175.08	£175.00 £205.62

We stock Printer Ribbons, Inkjet
Cartridges

New/Recycled Laser Toner Carts
Prices available on request

Digital Camera Specials

prices include Photolink software

Olympus C-21	£510.63	£599.99
Olympus C-2000	£595.74	£699.99
Olympus C-2500	£1021.27	£1199.99

POWERED SPEAKERS

Ex. VAT	Inc VAT
80 watts with PSU	£8.50 £9.99
240 watts with PSU	£17.00 £19.98
380 watts with PSU	£21.00 £24.68
Subwoofer system	£42.00 £49.35

Replacement Floppy Drives

A3000/400/500 £29.00+vat (£34.08)
A30X0/4000/5000 floppy allows cross
- formatting of HD and DD discs
£29.00+vat (£34.08)

We have a large collection of Budget PC
software suitable for RPC PC Emulators
and PC clones inc. Education, Home,
games and utilities please ring for list

Alternative PC Bases

i.e. PR300 from ONLY £249.00 + VAT ring

HOW TO ORDER

BY MAIL or PHONE: Cheques or P.O.s should be
made payable to 'CTA DIRECT'.

CREDIT CARD / SWITCH please give name,
address, tel. no, card no, expiry date, issue no.

BY EMAIL: sales@cta.u-net.com

OFFICIAL ORDERS by MAIL or FAX please

Carriage charges inc. ins. & packaging charged at cost

Small items (under 2Kg)....no more than £6 + vat

One box of items totalling upto 25Kg...£6.50 + vat

Computer systems.....£13 + vat

All prices are correct going to press. E&OE

All goods are fully guaranteed but not supplied on
approval

(All Prices below include VAT)

THE BARGAIN BASEMENT

Boxing Manager	£5.00
ColourSep (Colour Separation Software)	£5.00
D'File Font Pack (Academy)	£5.00
D'File Font Pack (Balmoral)	£5.00
D'File Font Pack (FreeStyle Script)	£5.00
D'File Font Pack (Manhattan)	£5.00
D'File Font Pack (Mastercard)	£5.00
D'File Font Pack (Old Towne 536)	£5.00
Jahangir Khan Squash	£5.00
Outline font (BookM)	£5.00
10 out of 10 any title	£9.00
Arm Tech Labeller	£9.00
Arm Tech ClipArt (various per pack)	£8.00
FIRE and ICE	£10.00
Galactic Dan	£10.00
HERO QUEST	£10.00
My World Support Disc Ancient Egypt	£10.00
My World Support Disc Ancient Greece	£10.00
Wavelength	£10.00
World Class Leaderboard (GOLF)	£10.00
Zool (HD)	£10.00

Cable-Free



Mouse for RiscStation & A7000 /Mica £19.95 inc.

Mouse for Risc PC / A5000 /A400 etc. £37.95 inc.

Keyboard for RiscStation , RPC /A7000 £39.95 inc.



Trackball for RiscStation
£24.95 inc

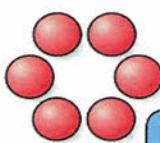
Trackball for RPC
£42.95 inc

Visitors to the Wakefield show in May could not have failed to notice the rather striking box on the Cerilica stand. No, it wasn't some kind of futuristic toaster, but the first machine to be designed specifically to house the eagerly-awaited Imago motherboard from Millipede - the Nucleus.

Apart from its striking looks, the Nucleus certainly packs a punch in terms of computing power, which looks set to place it firmly at the top of the RISC OS power stakes. However, the thinking behind it is based upon professional design and it's aimed firmly at the top-end specialist graphics market. Coming from the people who are bringing us *Vantage*, this already has an impressive pedigree.

According to Cerilica, Nucleus is 'over-engineered on purpose. It is designed to last'. Certainly in a potential market ruled by Macs, the Nucleus looks even more unconventional than the iMac.

Being focussed on one specific area and intended as a low-volume product allows the Nucleus to be designed and produced with



nucleus

Nuclear power?

unrivalled workmanship. This looks set to not only be a high-powered workstation but also a stylish status object - an important factor in its intended market of graphic designers and artistic executives; a world where plastic is taboo and anodised aluminium is cool.

Although the machine is not expected to be ready until the winter, the first concept drawings were started mid 1999. Indeed, all computer design has taken place using existing Risc PC equipment, mainly using *Vantage*, *Photodesk* and *WorraCAD*.

As you can see from the panel opposite, the proposed spec is

certainly impressive, although this is subject to change before the final machine is ready. Indeed, Cerilica are keen to point out that the machine is very much customisable to the user's exact specifications, an Aston Martin of the RISC OS world.

It has been the design and technical specification that have driven the development of Nucleus, not the constraints of a budget. Therefore the price is expected to be around the £2000 mark, excluding a monitor, although obviously this will depend upon the price of the final Millipede board.

And you never know, at Wakefield 2001 you might even be able to walk away with one.

Cerilica

<http://www.astutegrfx.demon.co.uk/cerilica/nucleus/>



Provisional Nucleus specifications

Case

- Fully metal case: 4mm aluminium laser-profiled side panels, aluminium corner extrusions and steel internal dual chassis
- Approximate dimensions: 430mm x 430mm x 200mm
- Unique dual internal chassis allows for quick access to either motherboard and expansion podule cards or drives and power supply
- Three 5" drive bays (for CDs, DVDs, removable storage, etc.)
- Six 3" drive bays (for floppy drives, hard discs, etc.)
- Three further hard discs may be fitted internally
- Four EASI podule expansion slots
- 230W or 300W power AT supply (with switched monitor power output)
- Integrated screwdriver and allen key toolkit
- A big red 'self destruct' button on top to act as the off switch (will be aluminium in the production version).

Hardware

- Millipede Imago motherboard (very marketable, given Millipede's association with shows like *Who Wants to be a Millionaire?*)
- Intel StrongARM RISC processor with processor upgrade connector
- 128MB standard PC SDRAM (up to 512MB may be fitted) running at a minimum of 100MHz
- 16MB flash memory
- Video resolution up to 2048 x 1536 at 72Hz in 24-bit (16+ million) colours — monitor dependant.
- 100 Base-TX Ethernet
- Dual EIDE interface allowing four EIDE drives to be driven as standard with planned ultra DMA mode running at 32MB/s
- Serial port up to 460 KB/s
- Dual USB port
- PS/2 mouse
- PS/2 Cerilica Multi-Media Keyboard (MMK) includes music buttons, rotary volume/*Vantage* object control, hotkeys
- Game port with joystick and MIDI I/O
- Enhanced SoundBlaster™-compatible sound processing
- Audio/video expansion bus with four real-time video streams

- Standard podule bus with enhanced data rate
- Additional decoded podule connector
- Standard processor expansion connector for PC card (future potential software driver dependant)
- At the heart of the Imago lies an FGPA chip which may be programmed after manufacture allowing key software components to be programmed into hardware providing potentially great increases in performance — *Vantage* being the first application set to benefit, as one might expect.

Operating System

- RISC OS 4
- The OS is frugal on memory, and may be completely placed within Flash memory making it undeletable. It will never be necessary to reinstall the OS, and it consumes virtually no memory
- Software-loadable upgrades
- Highly efficient user interface with minimal intrusion on the design and publishing process
- May be networked to PCs and Macs
- Discs from PCs, Macs and Linux may be read and written to
- Internet access packages available (certain optional components at cost)
- Screen colour and resolutions may be altered quickly and easily without having to reboot
- Inbuilt PostScript output
- Direct enhanced printing to selected printer models
- System-wide on-screen font anti-aliasing for accurate and sharpest possible display down to very small font sizes

Peripherals

- 3" floppy drive
- CD drive (music output can be directly controlled by MMK)
- Large EIDE fast access hard disc

Software

- Basic RISC OS software bundle includes files editors, bitmap graphic import/export, pixel editor, vector graphic editor
- Cerilica will actively be seeking licences to bundle further software as standard, including a range of excellent freeware graphics utilities

In brief

Mico video card

MicroDigital have become the latest vendor to supply a new-generation video enhancement card for RISC OS machines. Their 'Lightning Video Card' follows hot on the heels of John Kortink's card, announced last month, and is designed specifically for their Mico computer.

Fitting on a MicroBus expansion card, it has been designed to remove the video processing bottleneck from the 7500FE processor — hence allowing it to run at full speed. The card will run resolutions up to 1600x1200 with 24-bit colour at 72Hz and the additional processor speed gain should boost the overall speed up to compete with StrongARM performance.

MicroDigital
(01274) 618774

RO4 users en Guard

The ARM Club has upgraded their popular *StrongGuard* software to become fully RISC OS 4 compatible. *StrongGuard* enables a lot of the old, non-StrongArm compatible games to be run on StrongARM-equipped Risc PCs.

Including a database of over 150 game titles, it should keep RISC OS 4-owning games players out of mischief for a long time.

The ARM Club
(07010) 709849
info@armclub.org.uk

Heading into Space

Many people may have spotted the small print on Spacetech adverts promoting their new satellite Internet service. Offering broadband Internet via satellite makes it far faster than either ISDN or modem connections. However, RISC OS users will have noticed that currently this service is only available to PC owners, due to the additional hardware and dedicated software required.

Spacetech are now working on a RISC OS solution, but this will very much depend upon the level of interest they receive. Although the hardware equipment required to receive the service costs around £350.00, you can obtain speeds up to the full 2Mbps.

Spacetech
(01305) 822753
sales@spacetech.co.uk

RISCOS Ltd: 'rumours of our death...'

There have been a lot of rumours flying around the Net recently concerning changes at RISCOS Ltd. One web site even went so far as to conclude that the company were effectively finished, and so too was any hope of development of RISC OS.

It is true that there have been recent staff movements at the company concerning software engineers. It's also true that the full picture of who will be working for which company cannot be stated at the time of writing, because it hasn't been finalised and so is subject to the usual legal and contractual restrictions.

Whatever happens though, this won't see the end of RISC OS. RISCOS Ltd are committed to continuing to develop the operating system, and to having a software engineering capability. This capability may be in-house, it may involve contractors, or it may utilise Pace employees, but it *will* exist.

'We are committed to meeting the continuing needs of the platform,' affirms Gareth J Dykes, Chairman of RISCOS Ltd. 'The RISC OS desktop market needs specialist knowledge, knowledge we have, and knowledge that Pace values. Contractually, the development of RISC OS desktop

(and portable) machines is the preserve of RISCOS Ltd – Pace wish to develop RISC OS for other functions.

'Pace is very happy with this split and it makes practical sense, and is for the benefit of the platform, for the two companies to work together.'

What RISC OS Ltd *are* doing is branching out into other areas where they can be useful. Gareth sees one of the company's future roles in the market as that of promoting the RISC OS platform. Although the market is already an unusually co-operative one, each company is inevitably going to be pushing their own corner. There is no one to speak for the platform as a whole, and this is a role that Gareth feels that RISCOS Ltd – who show no preference to any of their hardware partners over any other – could easily fill.

Such a role is desperately needed at the moment. Microsoft are floundering, not only because of their well-publicised troubles with the DoJ in America, but because people in education are increasingly concerned with the high cost of ownership of the Wintel platform. It's a good time for someone to be singing the praises of RISC OS in a

number of selected niche markets, which is just what RISCOS Ltd intends.

Niche markets are very much RISCOS Ltd's target at the moment; the goal of 'a RISC OS computer in every home' is not a realistic one right now, although if the company are successful in niche markets, who knows where RISC OS might be in five years?

RISCOS Ltd are also looking to set up an 'expert consultancy network' made up of people with a great deal of experience in the RISC OS market. This network will act as a sort of 'think tank', where ideas and possible future projects can be aired.

'We're *not* casting around looking for ideas,' emphasises Gareth. 'We have some very clear plans, but we hope that the network will allow us both to refine and improve the ideas we have, and to carry the rest of the industry along with us. It's important that the industry pulls together.'

While that's hardly a new message, it's encouraging to hear it emphasised at this crucial time in the RISC OS market.

RISCOS Ltd
www.riscos.com

ArgoNet – Voyaging on with new projects

There are some interesting changes occurring at ArgoNet, the Internet provider who pride themselves as being one of the only ISPs in the country that can offer dedicated support for RISC OS users.

ArgoNet were initially established with an educational focus in schools where ArgoNet's Internet access software, *Voyager* for Acorn, has a reputation for ease-of-use. Today ArgoNet can offer solutions to your Internet requirements whether you just want to use RISC OS for dialup Internet access, or want to run your own virtual domain server.

From the 1 August until 31 August, ArgoNet are offering a special 'get online' pack consisting of

the simple-to-use *Voyager* Internet suite which contains everything you need to get online with the minimum of fuss, and a full Internet connection for six months. With this you get five e-mail addresses and 20MB of web space. This whole pack is at the low cost of only £60.00 inc VAT (plus p&p).

What's more, to complement this offer, if you order a 'get online' pack plus an additional six months subscription you can get a .co.uk domain registration (subject to availability) absolutely free. A complete hosting service is also available.

As part of an ongoing series of new projects, ArgoNet are now offering web design services and a range of

CGI scripts written to order. This means that RISC OS users can spice up their pages with guest books and other interactive content. As well as web hosting, ArgoNet can now provide you with a dedicated Cobalt RaQ 3 server. Visitors to the Wakefield show may have seen a few of these being demonstrated on the ArgoNet stand and also on the Castle Technology stand.

These snazzy looking blue boxes can be configured to your exact specification and effectively setup as your very own e-commerce or virtual domain hosting server. The beauty of them is in the extremely low support and maintenance required. The whole server can be configured with only a few key presses.

ArgoNet
www.argonet.co.uk



Shop On-Line at:

<http://www.surftec.net>

We specialise in Acorns!

IPace ISDN TA

The PACE ISDN Professional, a fully featured ISDN2E Terminal Adapter compatible for use with ISDN and BT HighWay Lines. It includes UK Caller ID and 2 Analogue Ports.

Available only for a short period until remaining stocks are depleted!

Included by Surftec are the necessary scripts for use with the ANT Internet Suite and support for use with major providers such as BT Internet and Demon Internet.

- Two 64kbps channels
- Simultaneous Voice & Data/FAX
- Up to 230,400bps transfer
- Multi-link PPP Support
- MSN Support
- Limited 3 month warranty



Software Offers



- Artworks StrongARM Compatible CD Version £69
- Eureka! 2 including Version 3 Upgrade for RISC PC Systems £69



- OmniClient II Single User £69



- HyperStudio Acorn RISC OS V1 on CD ROM £69
- Japan ATLASFILE £10
- World Population ATLASFILE £10
- The World's WEATHER £10
- Understanding THE BODY £10

Peripherals

Printers

Epson Stylus Colour 460	£67
Epson Stylus Colour 660	£89
Epson Stylus Colour 760	£122
Epson Stylus Colour 860	£159

Scanners

Epson Perfection 1200 (SCSI)	£199
Image Master & Twain	£35

Processors

StrongARM (T) & RO4 Upg.	£255
--------------------------	------



- Epson Stylus Colour 460
 - 720 DPI • 4 Colour Dual Cartridge System • Perfect Entry Level Home Printer.
- Epson Stylus Colour 860
 - 1440 DPI • Large Ink Tank
 - Fast Colour Printing
 - Clear Lid, see the action without lifting the lid!



Introducing Surftec Ltd

We have great pleasure to be able to launch our services to the Acorn market as a whole.

Traditionally we have been supplying Acorns to schools in Hampshire, Wiltshire, Dorset and surrounding areas offering a high level of service and support along with competitive prices.

Give us a call, if you need any peripherals for your computer. We will be happy to locate the correct product, supply the necessary Acorn drivers and cables.

All products listed here come complete, all necessary cables are supplied as standard at no additional cost!

Free telephone support is available on all products.

If you are on the Web visit our web-site for a complete listing of all our products and up to the minute prices.

If you find a product at a lower price elsewhere, please contact us and we will attempt to match or better that price!

NB: We now welcome International orders and can accept payment in your local currency saving you a lot of time and trouble!

Surftec
Internet Computer Solutions

Surftec Ltd
Burma Cottage
Glen Road
Beacon Hill
Hindhead
Surrey
GU26 6QE

Telephone: +44 (0)1428 608121
Fax: +44 (0)1428 608123
Mobile: +44 (0)7940 799833

E-Mail: sales@surftec.net
WWW: <http://www.surftec.net>

Another Day at the Races

Preparations are well advanced for this year's RISC OS 2000 show to be held at last year's popular venue, the Queen's Stand, Epsom racecourse.

Organisers (the ARM Club, Surrey and Sussex Acorn User Group and RISC OS User Group of London) are fast building on the success of last year's well-attended inaugural show.

The show will run from 10 - 5 on Saturday and 10 - 4 on Sunday. Shuttle buses will run to and from the main Epsom station. Ticket prices will be £4 in advance, £5 on the door and will be valid for both days.

By early June, over twenty major exhibitors were already committed to attend. All the major players in the RISC OS market will be there including Castle, RiscStation, Spacetech, RISCOS Ltd and, of course, *Acorn User*. The RiscStation-sponsored small exhibitor village

looks more popular than ever, with over half the stands already booked. Other sponsors are Spacetech and *Acorn User*.

For advance tickets write to RISCOS 2000, Merton Court, 38 Knoll Road, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 4QU.

RISC OS 2000
www.armclub.org.uk/shows/riscos/



Dream a Technodream for me...

Nevryon and *Technodream* are two of the best shoot-em-ups ever released for Acorn computers (it says here – actually, if memory serves, they were pretty good). ProAction, that haven for 'nostalgia' games, has now released a CD-ROM containing both programs, allowing gamers to delve into *Technodream* on their modern RISC OS 4 computers and re-live the nostalgia of *Nevryon* on the 65Em emulator.

Also supplied are a small number of other shoot-em-up games, providing a good sample of what's available for RISC OS users.

The CD-ROM is available at £12.50 inclusive (please add £2.50 for non UK orders) from R-Comp Interactive, ProAction's distributors.

R-Comp Interactive
proaction@rcomp.co.uk
www.rcomp.co.uk
(01925) 755043

Manchester meetings

In the past, MAUG (Manchester Acorn User Group) has been unable to advertise its meetings very far in advance because of room booking restrictions.

To solve the problem, the group has found an additional venue: The Bank at Sale pub in Sale town centre. MAUG has arranged a meeting every month to October – so Manchester-based readers should put the following dates in their diaries now:

- 26 July
- 16 August
- 20 September
- 18 October

The venue has free parking (Sainsbury's) and is within five minutes driving distance of the M60 (J7) and walking distance of the Metro (Sale).

In addition to the above dates there will be a special meeting on computer fraud on 12th July at the Manchester City Magistrates Training Room.

Manchester Acorn User Group
www.acorn.manchester.ac.uk
john@cartmell.demon.co.uk
0161-969-9820

Aleph One will help you get Linuxed

You can't have missed the current hype surrounding Linux, which is being touted as the operating system that will topple Microsoft, but until now it's been rather complex to install on a RISC OS machine. ArmLinux has existed for several years, but because Linux is a complete new operating system it requires either its own dedicated hard disc or a partition on your existing one – which necessitates reformatting your drive and possibly much hair-pulling.

Enter Aleph One to the rescue. Aleph One have long been associated with running alternative operating systems on Acorn machines by manufacturing PC cards.

The company have now entered the Linux arena with the first easy solution for RISC OS users who wish

to try out the world of Linux. They offer two solutions; one is just a copy of the usual ARMLinux distribution with RedHat installer on a bootable CD, for those who feel competent enough to do their own installation.

The second solution, and one which may prove more interesting to the newcomer, is to supply a new hard disc, pre-installed with ArmLinux, that you can just plug in and play with.

ArmLinux is now fully RISC OS 4 compliant and contains a newer version of RedHat than the previous ARMLinux, so if you want to see what all the hype has been about, now might be an ideal time to try it out.

Aleph One
(01223) 811679
info@aleph1.co.uk



Special offer!!

August 2000

RISC OS customers can order a 'Get On Line Pack' for £60
RISC OS Voyager Software, 6 months online and VAT included.

Anyone ordering a 'Get On Line Pack' and an extra 6 months at the same time, will qualify for a free .co.uk domain name.*

* Subject to availability

ArgoNet can provide you or your business with Internet and dedicated Server hosting solutions.

- Dedicated support for RISC OS Users
- Cobalt RaQ3 and Qube - dedicated Server hosting
- E-Commerce solutions
- Innovative web design and hosting
- Fast reliable Internet access

**Argo Internet Services, 7 Dukes Court,
Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 2FX**

Tel: (01243) 815815

Fax: (01243) 815805

e-mail: info@argonet.co.uk Web: www.argonet.co.uk

Upgrade NOW! to

RISC OS 4

**Key benefits of using
RISC OS 4 include...**



- Vastly improved disc handling**

RISC OS 4 supports long filenames, allows huge numbers of files to be stored in any directory, and makes extremely efficient use of disc space, giving 30% to 40% more space on an average hard disc than RISC OS 3

- Faster performance**

Machines fitted with RISC OS 4 run typically 40% to 50% faster than equivalent RISC OS 3.7-based hardware—a major speed benefit which is particularly valuable for computers without StrongARM processors

- Extra ease of use**

RISC OS has a reputation for having the world's most efficient desktop interface, and RISC OS 4 improves it still further with new desktop enhancements, improved stability and even greater user-friendliness

- Remarkable compatibility**

RISC OS 4 is arguably the most backwards-compatible operating system upgrade for any modern computer system: virtually all software and hardware that works with RISC OS 3.5+ also works with RISC OS 4

Price £120 (fully inclusive)

Schools: Schools may purchase an evaluation copy of RISC OS 4 for £69 ex. VAT (strictly one unit per school; official purchase order required)

All the documentation you need!

Manuals CD



Get the complete RISC OS 3 Programmer's Reference Manual (PRM) on one CD-ROM, along with a plethora of other user guides

The Manuals CD contains not only the PRM but also many other RISC OS manuals, all fully corrected and cross-referenced in HTML format. Many of the guides are also supplied as they were originally printed, in Adobe PDF format. The complete contents of the CD are as follows:

HTML PDF

RISC OS PRM volumes 1-5a



RISC OS User Guide



BBC Basic



Assembler



C/C++



Toolbox



DDE



Internet



TimeCode



OmniClient



Value: £150 or more

Price: £30 or less!

Price £30 (£25 to Foundation members)

Special offer: Join the RISC OS Foundation (see below) and buy the Manuals CD for just £10 inclusive (offer available for one month only)

**FOUNDATION
RISC/User**

Foundation RISC User

Welcome!

News

Features

Forum

Database

A-to-Z Index

Help

Credits

RISCOS Ltd

3 Clarendon Road
Cyncoed, Cardiff
Wales CF23 9JD
Tel. 02920 492324
Fax 02920 440071
www.riscos.com
sales@riscos.com

FOUNDATION RISC/User

*The CD-ROM magazine for members
of the RISC OS Foundation*

Issues
1 & 2
already
available!



Join the RISC OS Foundation and receive the ground-breaking new CD-based magazine, Foundation RISC User, every quarter. Foundation RISC User is far more than just another CD full of software; it is a true multimedia magazine which sets new high standards for quality on the RISC OS platform. Every issue of Foundation RISC User is packed with substantial, interesting and useful articles by highly respected writers, plus news of the latest developments from RISCOS Ltd and its partners and third party developers, a forum for information exchange between RISCOS Ltd and RISC OS enthusiasts, and a comprehensive and fully cross-referenced database of hardware and software products and user groups. The entire magazine is fully indexed and extremely well organised, and is presented in a highly innovative, integrated format which redefines the concept of a magazine.

Readers' reactions to the first issue

"Well done on a BRILLIANT CD!!!"—Chris Flynn • "It's a really excellent job."—David Pilling

"Foundation RISC User shows why its Editor, Richard Hallas, received the RISC OS '99 Award for Editorial Excellence when he edited RISC User for Beebug. It is a smart, professional-looking publication."—Peter Jennings, *Eureka* magazine

"Evidently a great deal of thought has been put into the structure, which I found exceptionally easy to use."—Brian Carroll

"The Foundation CD has contradicted my opinion that I wouldn't be able to read a CD magazine happily."—Fred Bambrough

"I'm extremely impressed with the Foundation disc. It looks good, reads well and is simple to navigate."—Richard Blythe

"The interface is very friendly and better than my perception of what a CD-based magazine would be like!"—Andrew Weston

Price to new members: £35.25 • Acorn Clan members: £29.37

Foundation membership also includes regular email newsletters and other special offers (see the Manuals CD offer above)

What will you support?

Ben Levens has his say

I love the Acorn market. The way that everyone loves RISC OS and goes out of their way to sustain the market. Ever purchasing the new upgrades to their favourite software, without even the blink of any eye, parting with £30 here, £60 there and a nice round £100 for an OS upgrade. However, all is not what it seems.

In the 'Industry Standard' market, people will do just as I have said, part with their cash without even considering the fact that maybe they don't need the latest upgrade, they want it. They don't need to be told, they know they must be as up to date as possible.

So why, in our ever-shrinking market, do we have people (some of whom are developers) complaining about the statement "Buy RISC OS 4, or say goodbye to the RISC OS market". The statement might not be 100% percent accurate but, it is true to say, if you don't buy RISC OS 4 you won't see a RISC OS 5.

Our software developers are just too willing to be overly nice, providing brilliant upgrade after brilliant upgrade for free, when it would almost certainly be a chargeable update in any other market. It's amazing at this rate that more developers don't go out of business.

One problem with the RISC OS market is the attitude of the market. People are willing to argue that because the computers last 5-10 (or more) years, they have no reason to upgrade it, and continue to use the machine, complaining of its speed and 'quirks' rather than progress to the next machine. Unfortunately, because of this attitude, which I believe killed off the Workstation division of Acorn, people are not going to buy the latest RISC OS machine, they are going to jump ship.

If they had made the plunge earlier to a Risc PC from their ever trusted A310, Acorn would have sold more machines and ended up putting more money into future projects (Phoebe, for example).

And what was the problem with

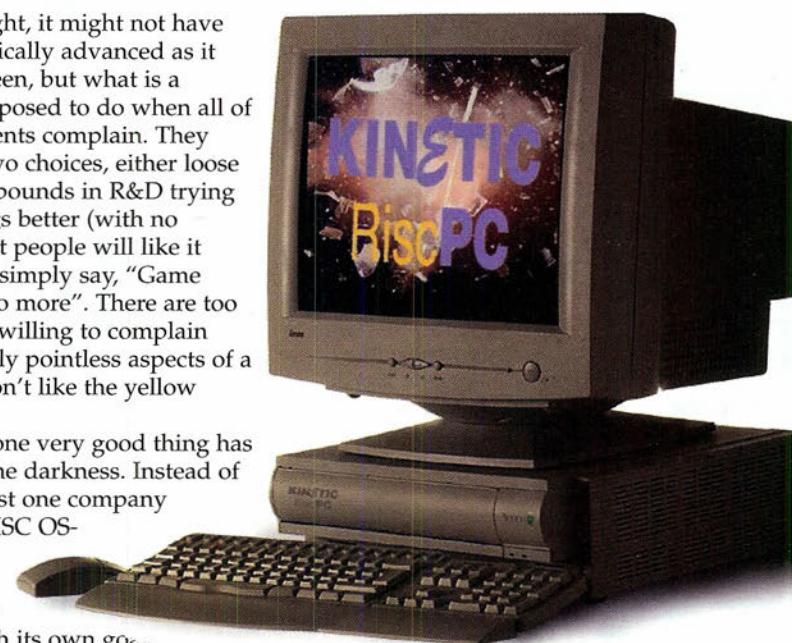
Phoebe? Alright, it might not have been as technically advanced as it could have been, but what is a company supposed to do when all of its trusted clients complain. They really have two choices, either loose another £2m pounds in R&D trying to make things better (with no guarantee that people will like it after that), or simply say, "Game Over, sorry, no more". There are too many people willing to complain about relatively pointless aspects of a product: "I don't like the yellow box".

However, one very good thing has come out of the darkness. Instead of there being just one company developing RISC OS-based computers there are now four, each with its own goals and planned future developments. This is probably the best thing to happen to the RISC OS market since the Risc PC reared its head in 1994.

This new 'team' of hardware developers should be able to do nothing but improve our bleak-looking future. With developments in the pipeline including the PCI enabled RiscStation, the two portables (from RiscStation and Microdigital) as well as the ViewFinder graphics card (showing that AGP can be used in a Risc PC) the outlook should be rosy.

So why are so many people unsure about the future, surely this amount of work can't fail, can it? I would say no, but many people in the newsgroups would disagree with me. How many of you out there love the market, but spend all of your spare time complaining about it publicly? A better idea would be to support the company that you are complaining about and get something done, a polite request for a fix is much better than starting a war in cyberspace, trying to push the company into submission.

If people who have been with the



market for years don't have any faith in it, what sort of future can we expect? The only way to keep it alive is to embrace it with open arms, not waiting and waiting for the 17th upgrade, buy each upgrade in turn, support the developers, support the hardware manufacturers and most of all, support RISC OS 4.

Without continued support toward our operating system there is no way that we will end up with a 32bit OS, VIDC/IOMD dependency, and all the rest. It might cost a bit more in the long term, but just think how good our software would be if we all supported each other.

And consider just one more thing: If you don't like the hardware, or the software, or the magazines. Just don't buy them, go away and buy Windows. No one is forcing you to use either, we all have a choice.

Stop complaining, and start doing. RISC OS: where would you like our market to go today?

benji@levens.co.uk
www.levens-software.co.uk

END

RiscStation netWORX

56Mhz ARM7500FE, 8Mb
10bT Net
Desktop configuration



Books

HTML 3.2 Quick Ref	5.00
Introduction to CGI/Perl	8.00
JavaScript Primer Plus	10.00
How to Program JScript	10.00
Idiots Guide to JavaScript	10.00
Tricks of the Java Prog. Gurus	15.00
Developing Java Applets	15.00

CD-ROM

Min. 44x IDE CD-ROM drive 39.00

Hard Discs

4.3Gb IDE	70.00
6.4Gb IDE	85.00
8.4Gb IDE	90.00
10.2Gb IDE (ROS 4)	95.00
13.0Gb IDE (ROS 4)	99.00
15.0Gb IDE (ROS 4)	105.00
17.0Gb IDE (ROS 4)	110.00
20.0Gb IDE (ROS 4)	125.00

Monitors

15" (3 yrs on site warranty)	100.00
17" (3 yrs on site warranty)	150.00
19" (3 yrs on site warranty)	250.00

Printers

Epson 660	99.00
HP 610C	79.00

Processors

StrongARM 233T + RO4 254.47

Speakers

200 Watt	20.00
800 Watt Subwoofer System	40.00
Headphone/Microphone set	10.00

Software

Photodesk v3 site licence	254.89
Plug-in collection FX-1	594.89
Plug-in collection FX-2	21.23
TopModel 2 2-4 machines	21.23
5 to 10 machines	130.00
DataPower 2 up to 10 machines	259.58
	389.79
	149.00
	347.00

Get connected to
the internet for only
£95

Includes
external 56.6k Modem,
WebsterXL Browser,
Messenger Pro and
connection software!

Still using the
Impression
Family?

Upgrade to OvationPro,
the desktop publisher,
for RISC OS.
for only

£114.89

Price includes HTMLPro

Please note that
prices exclude VAT
and carriage.

Carriage
Items up to 2kg £ 5
Items up to 25kg £ 9
Items over 25kg £17
Computers £17

RiscStation netWORX

56Mhz ARM7500FE, 8Mb
10bT Net
Desktop configuration



£399

RiscStation Lite R7500

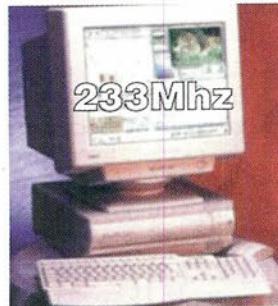
56Mhz ARM7500FE, 16Mb
10bT Net, 4.3Gb, 48x CD, Speakers
Tower or Desktop configuration



£499

Acorn Risc PC

16Mb, 4Gb 799.00
16+2Mb, 40xCD, 4Gb 879.00
32+2Mb, dvdCD, 8Gb 929.00



233Mhz

RISC OS 4

Upgrade (ROMS+CD) 99.00
Fitting (inc. Data Transfer) 30.00

On Site fitting

5-10 machines, each 45.00
up to 20 machines, each 37.50
20+ machines, each 30.00

Special Deals

RISC OS 4, 44x CD drive, plus
4.3Gb Hard Disc 199.99
6.4Gb Hard Disc 209.99
10.2Gb Hard Disc 219.99
15.0Gb Hard Disc 229.99
20.0Gb Hard Disc 249.99

microdigitalmico

If you would like one of these amazing new RISC OS 4 machines you can buy one of our three standard models, or pick'n'choose your own parts from our list below and we'll build it for you!

The Mico Base includes Base Unit (Desktop or Tower), Floppy Drive, Keyboard, Mouse, 200W Speakers, Fireworkz, Pipedream + extra software!

Mico Base will not be sold on its own

Standard

16Mb, 4.3Gb,
44xCD, Speakers
Desktop or Tower

Home

32Mb, 10.2Gb,
44xCD, Speakers
Desktop or Tower
+
56k Int. Modem

Business

64Mb, 20Gb,
44xCD, Speakers
Desktop or Tower
+
56k Int. Modem

Pick'n'Choose

Mico Base £369
16Mb £ 30
32Mb £ 45
64Mb £ 95
10Mb Network £ 18
56k Int. Modem £ 56
Int. ISDN £ 76

£499

£599

add £20 for ISDN TA

£699

add £20 for ISDN TA

Pick your HD, CD
& extras from our
main list

internetmico

For an additional £59 you can have
Voyager Internet Software and 6
months internet access with Argonet
Requires Modem. Available only for the Mico

Ovation Pro

desktop publisher

Single user £127.66 Site Licence £255.32
All copies of OvationPro include HTMLPro.

We are happy to fit any listed device into your computer, please ring for
details. Products are only suitable for RiscPC, A7000+, RiscStation and
Mico machines.

Please send cheques with orders, payable to The Levens Organisation Ltd.

HTMLPro - internet tool for OvationPro
Single user £25.49 Site licence £42.51

A string of Perls

In the late 1980s, Larry Wall produced a high-level programming language he called Practical Extraction and Report Language, or Perl. Perl's heritage comes from tools and languages including the C programming language and Unix. Its process, file and text string manipulation functions make Perl ideal for database access, network administration tasks and World Wide Web programming.

Perl was conceived as an open source language, and has been continuously developed by both Larry Wall and a band of volunteers called the Perl Porters. There is a version ported by the RISC OS maintainer Nicholas Clark: *Perl* version 5.005_03 can be downloaded from his Web site at www.flirble.org/~nick/P/

Perl can be used to program Common Gateway Interface (CGI) functions which run on a Web server to present and process data both before and after it appears on the Web page. Even a simple e-mail response form uses a Perl script



often supplied ready-made by the ISP.

Such is the power of Perl scripts that many ISPs only allow their Web space users to call pre-configured CGI scripts whose code can't be accessed directly.

Commercial customers' Webspaces and some ISP home page servers do allow user-designed cgi scripts though, or you can install *Perl* and a cgi-supporting Web server (such as *NetPlex* reviewed in this issue) on a RISC OS computer to develop Perl scripts. The flexibility of Perl programming is such that its motto is "there's more than one way to do it", or TMTOWTDI, usually pronounced "Tim Toady".

To find out more about the language and maybe receive some Perls of wisdom, you can join the RISC OS Perl mailing list by sending an e-mail to riscos-subscribe@perl.org. Other Perl resources and information can be found on Web sites such as www.perlmonth.com and the Perl Mongers site at www.perl.org

It's in the new's again

Grammatical gripes have been aired again in the newsgroups, triggered by articles in recent issues of this venerable organ itself. Electronic publishing and author self-proof-reading are almost certainly responsible for recent lapses in grammar and punctuation, and it's well known that the apostrophe can easily lose its way as a result.

The official *Acorn User* position has been stated thus: "Grammar rules were invented after the fact of language. It's a conceit to assume that the rules are superior. The whole point is communication. If communication is occurring smoothly and without misunderstanding then if a rule is broken, is it important?

"However we would not use that view to excuse errors in *Acorn User* as common rules for language construction make communication easier."

Typographical errors, errors in print whether accidental or through misuse of standard grammar, do indeed cause

breaks in smooth communication and understanding. This is because the reader's eye and brain register a discontinuity in the expected flow of patterns. This interrupts the 'mind's eye' comprehension of the text which we normally manage to do without the need to actually parse the words individually. We are subconsciously using the 'rules' without realising it.

There are learned treatises to consult for other opinions: Sir Ernest Gowers' 'The Complete Plain Words' (HMSO), or should that be Gowers', (or even Gowers's?) has been guiding scholars through the English language for over 30 years. H.W Fowler's 'Dictionary of Modern English' (Oxford University Press) first published in 1926, has also been used for making definitive judgements of English usage.

You might also enjoy the humour and tongue-in-cheek banter of the newsgroup alt.possessive.its.has.no.apostrophe - yes it really does exist.

In brief

Get the Frax

Frax is a classified index of free and chargeable software for RISC OS. You can either browse the categories or use the search engine to locate programs on offer, which are given a star rating from visitors' comments and votes on quality. Contributors wishing to publicise software they have created, found useful, or just think warrants promotion are required to open an account for submissions. This allows on-line maintenance of entries, and qualifies the contributor to appear in the membership list which includes many well-known RISC OS software writers.

www.frax.co.uk

Can't FTP? Want FTPc

If you've bought Castle Technology's Oregano Web Browser or downloaded the demo version you'll need a separate FTP program for maintaining your Web site, and Colin Granville's freeware program FTPc is certainly king of the castle, receiving praise from all quarters.

Colin offers excellent support with frequent updates, and has recently moved the FTPc Web site to a more permanent home at www.ftpcc.com

On the Iconbar

Those guys at Acorn Arcade have been busy creating a new RISC OS Web site which involves the reader interactively. The Icon Bar is a smartly designed site to be a major source of information and resources, and features interactive comment on each page.

They hope it will complement other sites such as Drobe and the forthcoming www.riscos.net and www.riscos.org sites. It will be interesting to see if the RISC OS community can sustain all these new resources in cooperation, or will it be competition?

www.iconbar.com



Contacting me

David Dade:
comms@acornuser.com

Reflex

Electronics

The Official Service & Support Centre for all Acorn products

Risc PC Internal Modem

28.8 k Internal Modem Supplied and fitted : £90.00
Free PD Internet Software available.

NEW

Acorn Repairs

Acorn Computer repairs from..... £60.00*
Monitor repairs, prices from £45.00

We also offer a part exchange repair scheme on Acorn computer PCBs, PSUs and A4 batteries (ask for prices)

*includes BBC Bs, Masters, A3xxx series, All Archimedes, A4, A4000, A5000, Risc PC & A7000.

SPECIAL OFFER

(While Stocks last)

PC 486 DX4-100 S Cards for RISC PC

£65.00

All prices exclude VAT and delivery. E. & O. E.

All the Acorn Support you need...

Call now on 01438 317200

Fax 01438 311286 <http://www.reflexelectronics.co.uk>
service@reflexelectronics.co.uk

Reflex Electronics Service Limited, Unit 18,
Gunnels Wood Park, Gunnels Wood Road, Stevenage, Herts, SG1 2BH.

Easier document clipping

One of the biggest benefits and thus pleasures of using RISC OS is its unrivalled drag and drop capability. However one often over-looked additional feature is the 'global clipboard'. This works a bit like the cut and paste on that rival operating system that we don't talk about, but is generally more flexible and user-friendly.

Put simply, most modern applications allow you to cut (or copy) a selected area and store this in a globally accessible memory location so that you can paste the data into another compliant application.

This makes it a doddle to be writing something in an application such as *Easiwriter* or *Ovation Pro* and transfer data straight into either another editor or in fact any other application that imports the relevant data you have cut – such as Castle's new web browser *Oregano*.

Unlike the global clipboard on

other systems the RISC OS one isn't controlled by the operating system it is a communication protocol between applications. This is good because it achieves a far better level of functionality than the rivals; but the downside is that programmers have to actively implement quite a bit of additional code – assuming they even know the protocol exists – and many applications, including the Wimp itself, don't use it. Which is why you can't cut and paste writable icon text.

Assuming you do use applications that have it, the system works in a way that is completely invisible to the user. While this makes it intuitive and easy to use, if you make heavy use of cutting and pasting you might be excused for forgetting which bit of

data is available at any instant.

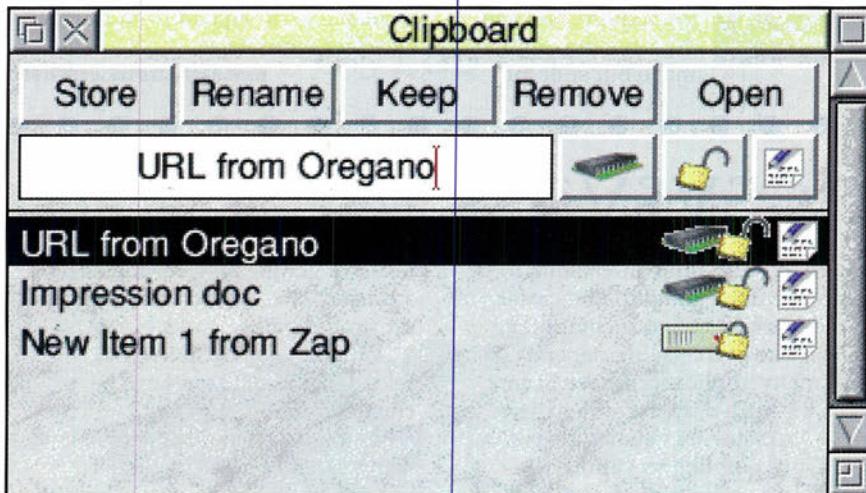
This is where *ClipMan* comes in. The author, Mark Daniel of Mad Cow Software obviously wanted to make control of the global clipboard that little more flexible for frequent users. Put simply it constantly stores the contents of the global clipboard, giving it a convenient name to label it. Once *ClipMan* has made a note of your last cut you can opt to store it for this session or indeed keep it for future sessions at a later date.

Each entry can be renamed, removed or 'launched', as if you'd double-clicked on it. This means that you can cut several selections from different applications, *ClipMan* will manage them all for you and then allow you to choose which particular selection is used to paste into your destination application.

As can be seen from the screenshot, there are a number of other options available. Each selection can be RAM- or disc-based and can be locked to keep on disc until told otherwise. Lastly, a third icon tells you what type of file the stored selection is.

One benefit of *ClipMan*, even to users of applications which don't support Acorn's global clipboard protocol, is the ability to drag an item from *ClipMan* into the required application using the normal RISC OS drag and drop. Now that's what I call real drag and drop control.

ClipMan can be downloaded from the Mad Cow Software Web site at www.madsoft.freeserve.co.uk/soft.htm



Lots of clever options available from the *ClipMan*

Behold the AntiWord

AntiWord will be ideal for all users who want to view those annoying Microsoft Word files that we occasionally receive via e-mail and don't want to invest in a full blown word processor application such as *Easiwriter* just to decode the odd

attachment. Simply load *AntiWord* and drag a Microsoft Word document to it. It will then display the contents of the document in its own window.

From here you have three options; Firstly you can scale the image should you wish to make it easier to view, especially if small fonts have been used. The two remaining options

allow you to save the document either as a Draw file or as plain text.

It doesn't work on every Word file but it's actively supported by the author Adri van Os and I'm sure new versions will be more frequent if he receives feedback. *AntiWord* can be downloaded from:

www.winfield.demon.nl/index.html

'ViewFinder' RiscPC

Hi Res graphics card

Some of the extra Modes available:-

True colour (24/32-bit)

1600 x 1200, 82 Hz 1280 x 1024, 107 Hz

High colour (16-bit) and 256 colour (8-bit)

1920 x 1440, 65 Hz 1800 x 1440, 68 Hz

1600 x 1200, 88 Hz 1280 x 1024, 107 Hz



ViewFinder offers more than just higher desktop resolutions; there is hardware acceleration of a number of common graphics operations, normally performed entirely in software by RISC OS.

Simple to fit. Should you need to for games etc. you can revert to your 'old' system. Produced by John Kortink of Windfall Engineering, available June.

ViewFinder has currently been tested on RISC OS 4.02, 3.70 and 3.60, Kinetic, StrongARM and ARM710

£235 inc VAT and UK delivery

ViewFinder & Iiyama Monitor bundles, get the best from your ViewFinder!

ViewFinder + 17" Pro £535, + Iiyama 19" Pro £701, + Iiyama 22" Pro £1010

Kinetic StrongARM upgrades

with 122MHz SDRAM

£350 if PX RO4 & StrongARM

£410 if PX StrongARM

£475 if no Part exchange

For 128MB version add £81

Kinetic

RiscPC

Systems 64MB/128MB from

£1187

S/H RiscPCs from £400

RiscPC, RISC OS 3.60, 16MB, 1MBvram & HD £400

MkII RiscPC, RISC OS 3.60, 16MB DRAM

1MBvram, HD, CD & 14" Monitor £500

A7000, RISC OS 3.6, 32MB DRAM, HD & CD £300

AKF60 (£ 50 with system) £65

Pocket Book 256K £80†

SCSI 4.3GB HD £145 Special Purchase!

Laser Printer Samsung 8ppm 600dpi £240

PC Card **5x86** 133MHz 512k Cache **£225** (From £90 with part exchange)

Psion netBook

7.7"LCD

640x480, 32MB

90% Keyboard

StrongARM

190MHz

£880

OpticPro A4 1200x600 with Acorn S/W & Slide unit **£160**

CD ReWriter IDE with Acorn S/W £235

Acorn C++ Less than HALF PRICE £125†

Acorn SCSI Interface AKA32 £50†

56K V90 Modem £80

10.2GB IDE Hard Disc £110

30GB IDE Hard Disc £275

Ovation Pro

including
Impression file
loader (when
available)

£150

RPC-PC Network pack, RPC NIC Int., PCI Int. card, cables & LanMan98 £185

250MB Zip Drive SCSI Ext. £150, Printer Port version with S/W £175, Int. IDE £165

S/H Access+ Interfaces Podules from £60, RiscPC NIC 10b2&T £80

CJE Prices include
VAT & delivery

DRAM for RiscPC/A7000 32Mb £85, 64Mb £85 & 128Mb £190



All CJE prices **INCLUDE VAT @17.5%**

& UK mainland delivery. Official Orders Welcome E&OE

Prices subject to change & stock.

Items marked† are sold by Fourth Dimension and have no VAT

RISC OS: The Search for Sophie

It all started quite some time ago in the hallowed halls of *comp.sys.acorn.misc*: the suggestion that RISC OS ought to have a mascot. You could blame Linux, whose cuddly penguin, Tux, has graced the pages of the past few months' *Acorn Users*. Tux has caught on in a big way, serving both as a logo for the Operating System and a banner under which supporters of the open source movement stand.

For advocates and users of RISC OS, the Acorn nut symbol has become inappropriate, a signpost to the past. The RISC OS 4 cube, although well-designed, is a signal only of a single version of the operating system; it does not indicate any sense of the culture within the (ex)-Acorn community.

And then someone suggested a squirrel. A red squirrel. The symbolism behind the idea is quite evident: red squirrels, although native to Europe, are slowly being endangered by the growing population of grey squirrels, to the extent that it's become uncommon to see red squirrels around now, despite being near-ubiquitous in the past.

The martyrdom that oozes from the idea isn't entirely justified, however. Red squirrels are only endangered in the UK: the rest of Europe hasn't seen anywhere near the population decline that Britain has, and RISC OS isn't limited in appeal only to the British Isles. But the squirrel's passion for nuts, hoarding acorns for the winter, is reason enough to sell the idea.

The red squirrel - Tufty reincarnated with geek pride - wasn't the only idea to emerge. A strong second contender was the

solar bear (our steamed editor's

preference, as it happens). Somehow, the image of Fox's Glacier Mints was hard to shake for some, and the association with penguins just a little too strong to avoid accusations of "bandwagoneering" and the idea has only surfaced in passing since.

Usenet being what it is, names for the mascot were a subsidiary subject of discussion, with a noticeable swing towards Sophie - in honour of Sophie Wilson, guru at Acorn and deity to those who remember just how impressive the BBC Micro and Archimedes were in their time.

Paul Vigay registered the domain *red-squirrel.com*, in anticipation of the foothold the mascot might achieve, but the discussion died down and Sophie was all but forgotten for a few months. Then Matthew Sackman posted what amounted to a rallying cry for anyone in the community.

Matthew's idea was to launch a comprehensive web site targeted not simply at people already involved with RISC OS, but instead at those who hadn't heard of it. The site would not be an advocacy rant, but a clear and thorough explanation of the philosophy behind, and technical details of, RISC OS, together with a wealth of background information and support for those already using the platform.

This thread, *Here and Now*, rekindled interest in the idea of a strong graphical identity for the platform as a whole, one which didn't depend too greatly on the past

that was Acorn, or any single company involved now. Sophie made a comeback. Usenet

Steve Ottens' squirrel



being what it is (again), slogans for the new identity were also a subject of discussion, with the idea emerging (again from Matthew) that a range of slogans could be used, with the site randomly choosing one from the list whenever a page was generated.

Matthew started a mailing list for those interested in the development of the site, *riscos.org* (again, kindly registered by Paul Vigay), and Matthew's own page dedicated to the growing impetus of the idea began to feature a few mascots and site layout designs which had been submitted by contributors to the discussion.

The Ottens brothers, quick off the mark with superbly crafted designs, submitted different interpretations of the red squirrel theme (a design from each of them is represented here), with others contributing simple *riscos.org* logos, or variations on the mascot idea (one, memorably, managing to achieve cuteness from an image of a cow and her cud).

A poll was arranged through *egroups.com*, the hosts of the mailing list, for votes to take place on which of the submitted mascots/logos and page design templates was the best, or at least most appropriate for the *riscos.org* site. At the time of writing, the results of the poll have not been announced, but the poll isn't necessarily the final arbiter of the design to be used.

The finished mascot may not even be a squirrel, or be called Sophie, but it seems clear that a mascot for RISC OS (even if only in the form of a logo for *riscos.org*), is an idea that won't go away.

Contacting AU

Andrew Green:
graphics@acornuser.com

 **RISC OS**
the intuitive operating system

Maarten Ottens squirrel

Netting the best

So you've coded up some cunning Web pages with all the latest bells and whistles, and now you want to try them out. What do you do? If you're like me you probably have to dial up your ISP, send your files off to some remote server and then either stay online as you make changes or continually drop the connection, makes changes, dial up, upload the files and drop the line again. Costly and painful. Wouldn't it be great if you could set up a Web server in your own home or workplace?

Enter *Netplex* or rather, *Netplex 2.00*, the new commercial version of a shareware program. For your money you get two 800K floppies (as an academic exercise I tried to get the software running on my ancient 4MB A310, but couldn't) - this includes the server itself, *SysLog* the logging utility, *PHP3* and *SSI* interpreters, and the Perl programming language.

Let's get one thing straight from the outset - if you want to set up an ISP and host Web sites, *Netplex* isn't going to be enough. RISC OS is a great desktop operating system, but it's not designed to handle the kind of pressures a fully-fledged Web server would have to put on it.

According to Netcraft (www.netcraft.com) Apache is the server software used for 60% of the Web sites around the world, and most of them will be running on some variant of the Unix operating system (Linux, *BSD, Solaris and so on); this is not without good reason, Unix is just plain better at this job.

As an aside, one of the world's biggest search engines, Altavista, installed some Microsoft NT servers as a trial - and got rid of them in a

Richard Goodwin casts a professional eye over a newly released Web server

week, the software just isn't up to the job.

To their credit Warm Silence Software acknowledge this, and are targeting *Netplex* at two main areas: the RISC OS-based Web designer who wants to test his or her sites without running up a huge 'phone bill; and schools where pupils can construct their sites without the cost and effort of going "live" straight away. To this end it's a fairly straight Web server - no fancy extras like multiple virtual domains here - but it is easy to set up, and with the Perl/SSI/PHP combination makes for a potentially powerful tool.

Having built my own Linux box to run Apache to host test sites on in the past, I have to say it's not the approach for the faint-hearted to take; the learning curve is steep, especially if you want all the extras, just to test a few pages. *Netplex*, on the other hand, has the usual RISC OS drag-and-drop approach - after installation just drop the directory containing your Web pages to the Choices window and that's pretty much it.

Plus, of course, you don't have to go to the expense of buying another machine, networking gear and so on - it just sits on your iconbar and allows you to fetch pages from <http://localhost/>, or if you want to fetch pages using another machine on the same network you can without having to dedicate your machine to just this one task.

However, using *Netplex* is not all plain sailing - having a fair collection

of Web sites on my hard drive, I tried to get them running under *Netplex* and found problems with most of the ones which tried to do anything more complex than straight HTML pages and images.

The main problem was that the version of Perl included in the package is out of date - a 1995 vintage, it doesn't have support for RISC OS to Unix filename conversion. I'd have had to have re-written all my scripts to use the RISC OS-style of filenames which goes against the whole idea of testing scripts offline before uploading them to a real server. It also lacked some pretty standard modules, for instance trying to use CGI, IO::File and IO::Sockets threw up errors.

Luckily I had a 1998 version of Perl already installed on my hard drive which I'd had the foresight to move out of the way before installing the version that came with *Netplex*, and found that this worked okay. However, *Netplex* doesn't appear to set up (or pass on) some of the standard environment variables that you need to get the most out of Perl CGIs, even with the "Set additional UNIX-style CGI variables" option switched on.

Let's say you want to serve a simple HTML file if the user is using *ArcWeb*, more complicated HTML using lots of tables if they're using something more modern, or inflict lots of cascading style sheet commands on PC users; usually you'd use:

```
$browser=$ENV{HTTP_USER_AGENT}  
in Perl but Netplex doesn't do this.  
Without knowing the location on the  
disc that the program is running  
from, you can't work out where to  
find other resources (such as  
$DOCUMENT_ROOT when you  
want to include files in PHP-parsed
```

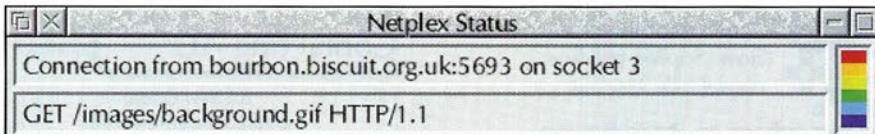


Figure 1:

st results

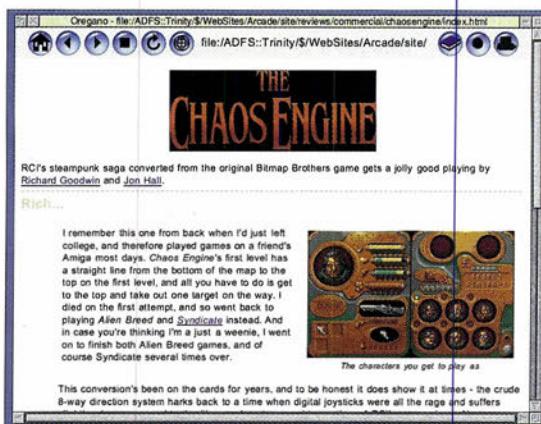


Figure IIa: A page without SSI switched on

pages). Even passing parameters in the URL seemed to leave me with undefined variables.

In Figure III (over the page), both pages show the output from a script that lists all the environment variables passed on by the server; the left page shows *Netplex*'s output, and the right page shows the exact same script uploaded to an Apache server. Apache not only passes on more data, it also allowed the script to see that I was using *Oregano* and so could use fully featured HTML, including colours.

Having used SSI commands for some time on most of my sites, I was keen to see how well this worked. SSI – Server Side Includes – allows you to do things like include the contents of another file, which means you can design a single header file and with just one command at the start of each page on your site have the same header on all pages. Want to change the colour of every page on a large Web site? Simply alter the header file and all the pages on your site instantly follow suit.

You can even include the output from a program, so within a page that sets up the standard layout for your site you can have information that changes every time you visit the page – for instance, a program that goes away and fetches the latest weather report. You can also add other tricks like give the time and

date that a file was last updated – never again will you have to remember to change that “this page last updated on...” section on your Web site, SSI will get the server to do it for you. The first thing that I had to do was set the filetype of my files to SHTML (&144) so that *Netplex* recognised them as needing attention; this does mean however that other programs might have problems, for instance double-clicking on the file won't send it straight to a web browser so you can check the fixed HTML parts of the file, you have to remember to go through the server every time. *StrongEd* guessed that the file needed editing in HTML mode, but other editors might not be so lucky – for instance, if you write Web pages using a DTP package you'd probably need to change the filetype back. These are not major problems, and neither is the exclusion of #if/#elif/#else and so on – this is a complex side of SSI that few people use.

However, I always use the “#include virtual” method of including headers and footers into pages, which is supposed to point the server to files relative to the current page; *Netplex* didn't get rid of the name of the current page when working this out though, so the instruction

```
<!#include virtual="ssi/header.html" ->  
did not find the file:  
ADFS::Trinity.$Webpages.  
ssi.header/html
```

It was trying to locate:
ADFS::Trinity.\$Webpages.
index/htmlssi.header/html
I had to go through my
pages and change these
commands to go to
/ssi/header.html, which
negates the point of using
this labour saving device
somewhat. This could so

easily be fixed, but one that needs to be made before I can reliably use SSI in the same way as I do under Apache, given that I have 250 pages using this method in just one of my sites alone.

In Figure IIa (left), the page has not been interpreted by an SSI parser; in Figure IIb (below) the same page has been parsed and the standard Acorn Arcade look and feel has been added to the page with just one command.

PHP is similar to SSI in that it adds new commands to boost your HTML, but is almost as powerful as Perl – starting out as someone's Personal Home Page project it now goes by the self-referencing name of “PHP: Hypertext Processor”. Not being a whizz at this particular language I used some pages written by a friend (Tim Fountain of iconbar.com) and got more of the same.

After filetying the files appropriately the lack of support for the \$DOCUMENT_ROOT variable meant I had to manually set the current directory to the Web site directory to enable the PHP parser to find included files, and some methods (such as the “virtual include” that's supposed to make transition between writing SSI and PHP easier) weren't supported, so the pages didn't render much past the header of the page. Admittedly it's some pretty complicated PHP I



Figure IIb: The same page but with SSI

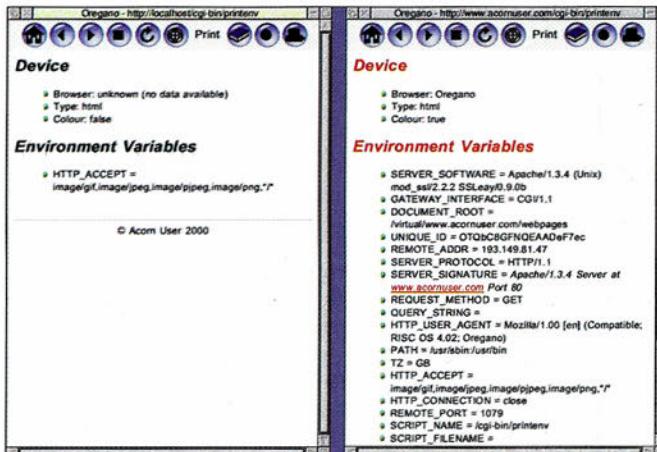


Figure III: Comparing the environment variables between NetPlex and Apache

fed it, but I expected a little more.

Finally on issues of compatibility with real-life servers there are some other, minor issue to bear in mind – for instance, pretty much any file can be interpreted by SSI, and the same goes for PHP – you could in fact mix and match, having lots of files ending in .html (/html under RISC OS) in the same directory which use PHP, SSI and straight HTML almost at random. This is because you can simply use the RISC OS-filetype facility to say, for instance, this is a PHP file no matter what the extension in the filename is.

This is great for running *Netplex* as an Intranet server, but “real” servers such as Apache have to look at the file’s extension; generally .html files are left alone, .shtml files are parsed for SSI content, and .php3 files are sent to the PHP application. While you can get Apache to use different extensions with a little persuasion, such as getting it to parse all .html files for SSI, you can’t get it to do both SSI and PHP on the same extension in the same directory, so pages that succeed in *Netplex* might fail in the real world unless you are properly disciplined.

You can also have programs anywhere on the site – not just in a cgi-bin directory, and in strange languages such as BBC BASIC, which again is a great help when running the server to serve pages to your local network but would be highly unlikely to succeed if you uploaded the pages to a “proper” server.

There are even other worries such as RISC OS having a case-insensitive filing system and Unix being case sensitive; perhaps an option for a

strict mode would help when testing?

A quick trip to the ANS filebase came up with a copy of *Netplex* (albeit a much earlier version), the PHP interpreter, and a later version of Perl (I didn’t look for SysLog, but it should be available from the DoggySoft site); given that all of this is out there on the ‘Net, as well as other Web servers such as Stewart Brodie’s *HTTPServer* and the one built into DeltaNet, and that Warm Silence’s upgrade policy is to charge a small fee for discs and not send upgrades by email, why bother to pay for this collection?

Hopefully the answer will be development – some of the problems I’ve pointed out are major stopping points to using the current version as a testing rig, but many of them seem like quite minor fixes from a programming point of view, bugs or omissions that appear to have crept in due to tight deadlines before the Wakefield show.

Just a little more work and this product has real potential, not just as a testing setup but perhaps also for serving Intranet pages within schools or small companies, especially where there’s a mixture of machine types so resources can’t simply be fetched using ShareFS. With the ability to run BASIC and other RISC OS native programs, it’s an inexpensive way to do quite complicated things like maintain a fileserver or reboot remote machines.

ShareFS allows you to change the contents and locations of files, but not actually run programs on other machines, and while there are less graceful ways of doing this (Justin Fletcher’s BCTD springing to mind

as a useful but limited telnet-style server), someone with little programming knowledge can write programs with a nice front end (i.e. Web pages) without having to learn Wimp or comms programming.

Conclusion

I feel that I – as a professional Web site designer – have spent most of this review moaning about the shortcomings of *Netplex* when there are points to recommend it. It’s an easy to set up, low cost, Web server without the need to have a dedicated server machine, and there’s some decent HTML help files.

You can even do some complicated stuff like redirect to a different page depending on server responses – perhaps go to a funky error page instead of displaying the standard “Not found” message. I think it’s because I see so much potential that has just been let down in this version by some obvious bugs/omissions in what is now a commercial product, not a shareware hobby.

If Warm Silence Software were to reverse their upgrade policy and send out an e-mail with upgrades to all registered users (like R-Comp do with products like *Webster XL*), or even just have password-protected FTP or Web space to keep upgrades on, I’d be a happier bunny because I would know that fixes would be forthcoming without having to keep paying for upgrades, however little the amount.

Anyway it’s more likely that *Netplex* will get a good buff and polish much sooner than all of us will get Internet access at a decent speed, so I think it’s worth keeping an eye out for this one, even if you’re not tempted to jump in and buy it straight away.

END

Product details

Product:	Netplex
Price:	£35 plus VAT
Supplier:	Warm Silence Software, PO Box 28, Woodstock, Oxon, OX20 1XX
Tel:	01608 737172/0585 487642
Fax:	01608 737172
E-mail:	info@wss.co.uk
Web:	www.wss.co.uk



From the names you can trust for all
your computer requirements.

CANNON
COMPUTING

Acorn

AUTHORISED RESELLER
CITRIX®

Maxtor
DIAMONDMAX
HARD DRIVES

RiscStation
— Registered Dealer —



YAMAHA
CD-R/RW
DRIVE

FOR ALL YOUR RISC OS REQUIREMENTS

www.cumana.net



Quantum.



QMS
Member of the Minolta Group **MINOLTA**
Printers That Mean Business



...and a whole lot more!

Call us now on Tel +44 (0)1279-730800/730900 Fax +44 (0)1279-730809. sales@cumana.co.uk, www.cumana.net

Cumana is a trading name of : Cannon Computing, Whitegate, Dunmow Road, Hatfield Heath, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, CM22 7ED. AU August 2000.

Without Prejudice. All Registered Trademarks acknowledged. Partners: Nigel D. & Sara L. Cannon.

All prices are UK £ sterling &, unless otherwise stated, include VAT, exclude delivery. E&OE.



GeneSys

- * Risc OS4 Authorised Installer
- * Risc OS4 Registered Developer
- * Authorised Acorn Dealer
- * Apple Dealer
- * IBM Pc Compatible Reseller

Services Offered

- * Custom made Mac's & P.C.'s
- * Peripherals & Consumables
- * Technical support & advice
- * Over 10 yrs of experience

Computer specialist for Business, Home and Education free onsite consultation available. Training sessions bookable at good rates. Printing, layout, artwork, photographic manipulation, services offered.

E-Mail sales@genesys.org.uk



PC

Address :-
41, Riviera Drive
Southend-on-Sea
Essex SS1 2QT

Contact :-
Voice 01702 462385
Fax 01702 469224
Mobile 0850 553356

Clares Micro Supplies Ltd



free serve

Don't have access to the Internet?



Don't worry, we can provide you with a package which gives you, E-mails, Newsgroup access, Web surfing and includes a modem.

We can now offer you 4 different options:

- 1) Internal RPC 33.6k modem with all software and connection to Freeserve. £69.95
Software is • Socketeer, for dialling your internet provider; • Messenger/Newsbase, for reading writing and storing your email and news; • Popstar, for sending and receiving mail; • Newshound, for sending and receiving news; • Webster XL, for Web browsing.
- 2) External USR 56k Modem with all the software and connection to Freeserve. Comes with Webster XL for browsing the Web. £109.95
- 3) Internal 33.6k Modem with all the software and the New Oregano Browser and connection to Freeserve. £109.95 (Oregano replaces Webster XL)
- 4) External USR 56k Modem with all the software and the NEW Oregano Browser and connection to Freeserve. £169.95 (Oregano replaces Webster XL)

All options come with our own RISC OS-specific fitting instructions.

The software provided comes on CD-Rom. If you don't have a suitable drive we can supply them at a very reasonable cost, call for details. Alternatively the software can be provided floppy disc if requested.

Don't forget our extensive range of Software and Hardware upgrades.
All prices include VAT. Please add £6 P & P to each option.

CLARES
Micro Supplies Ltd

75a WEBBS LANE, MIDDLEWICH, CHESHIRE CW10 9DS
TEL: 01606 833999 FAX: 01606 834111 email: sales@claresmicro.com
Web site: <http://www.claresmicro.com>



Supporting RISC OS users in South East England

Saturday 1st July 2000

**Alban Arena, Civic Centre,
St. Albans, Herts**

Doors open from 10am until 4.30pm

Adults £3.00

ARM Club or Foundation £2.00

**Children under 16 FREE (accompanied by an adult)
(Pay on door)**

- NEW products! ● Theatre programme
- Special show discounts ● Software to be won!
- Hobbyist/Games area

FREE bus shuttle from St. Albans train stations

Phone: (01935) 413170 Fax: (01935) 413170

**Email: acornshow@argonet.co.uk
<http://www.argonet.co.uk/acornshow>**

Surfing made even easier

Francis Richards gets more from his Web browsing

For all that their marketing was a disaster, Acorn's software designers were (and still are, though now in different jobs) excellent. One of their bright ideas was the plug-in protocol for Web browsers. The idea being that, rather than hard-wiring the ability to deal with any new Web standard into the browser (Java being a case in point) a separate program would implement

the standard and could be "plugged into" the browser automatically.

Hence the browser could stay relatively simple and plug-ins could come from anywhere. In addition applications other than browsers can also implement the plug-in protocol, for

example *TechWriter* can have Java on a page.

All the major RISC OS Web browsers use the plug-in protocol and we had hoped for a deluge of third-party plug-ins to work with them, however only *DrawPlug* from Justin Fletcher (allowing your browser to display Draw files) appeared. Until now.

Like public transport, we see nothing for ages then three come at once. In this case, we have the *SVG* and *Sound* plug-in software from Warm Silence Software and also Leo Smiers *Flash* plug-in (not reviewed here).

SVG – a monitor type?

SVG is a scalable vector graphic format which is just coming onto the scene and until recently was only available for *Netscape* browsers as a plug-in (Microsoft again not realising the potential – something, like the Internet, they were slow to take up). *SVG* is very similar to our own *Draw* graphic format – they've finally caught up.

They are compact, the picture quality is far better than *GIFs*; can be scaled to any size without loss of definition; and, unlike *JPEGs*, the quality is not reduced for compactness. Better still though is that the plug in has a fine pedigree behind it – Justin again, working wonders.

I've visited plenty of Physics and Maths Web sites which have decided

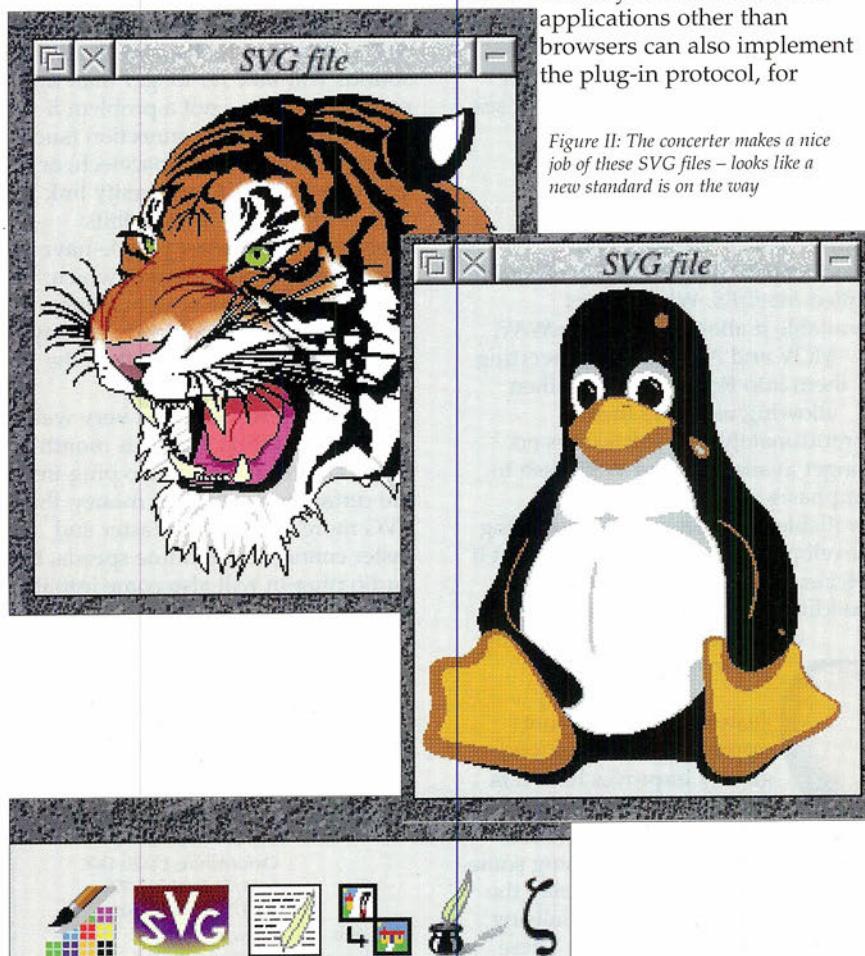


Figure I: SVG to Draw converter among some old friends

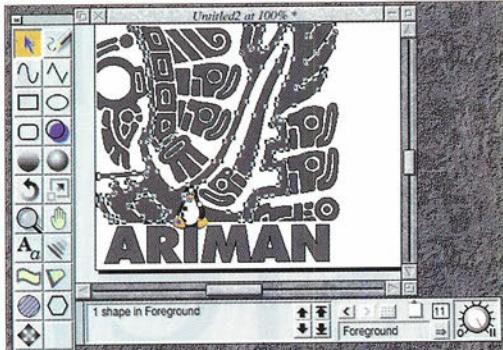


Figure III: Load your new drawfile into your favourite app

to use the SVG format over the traditional formats. When I have emailed them over why they've used this format, all replied that it was down to the scalability and overall quality of the format.

To use the SVG plug-in, it just needs to have been seen by the Filer to let the browser find it. Stick it in Boot:Resources, as with Java.

However it doesn't end there, SVG is a complete application and will load on to the iconbar. You can drag any SVG file on to it and the program will pop it up in a window,

from where you can export it, as a drawfile, to any other application.

It's possible that not all the bugs are ironed out yet because we did find that the resultant files were tiny. However, as this is a vector format which means that you can just scale it up to normal size – just don't be surprised at the blob sitting in the bottom lefthand corner.

The illustrations here show several SVG files all originated on other platforms and rendered on RISC OS machines.

In fact the story doesn't stop there, because along with my latest version of SVG I was also given a new Draw to SVG converter, currently it's only a beta command line program but it is getting there.

Interestingly enough our familiarity with using vector graphics means that the RISC OS-based sites are likely to proliferate with excellent (compact) graphics, and it'll take those other sites quite a time to catch up. bearing in mind that any Web site that takes longer than 10 seconds to load usually loses its customer it gives us a lot of potential.

Make a noise!

Warm Silence Software had a product prior to the demise of Acorn called *MovieFS*. When it was available it allowed us to use WAV,

MOV and AVI files by converting them into Replay files and then allowing us to use them.

Unfortunately, this software is no longer available – and WSS wish to emphasise that it really isn't available anymore and it's not being developed so don't call them about it because you won't get it. However, building on this technology, WSS have brought us a sound plug in for Web browsing.

Like so many features of the Internet, appropriate use of sound greatly improves how it is viewed (I recall visiting a Dr Who Web site which would play the theme and, using some clever JavaScript, would play the sound of the Tardis dematerialising when you clicked on a link). These small things made visiting that Web

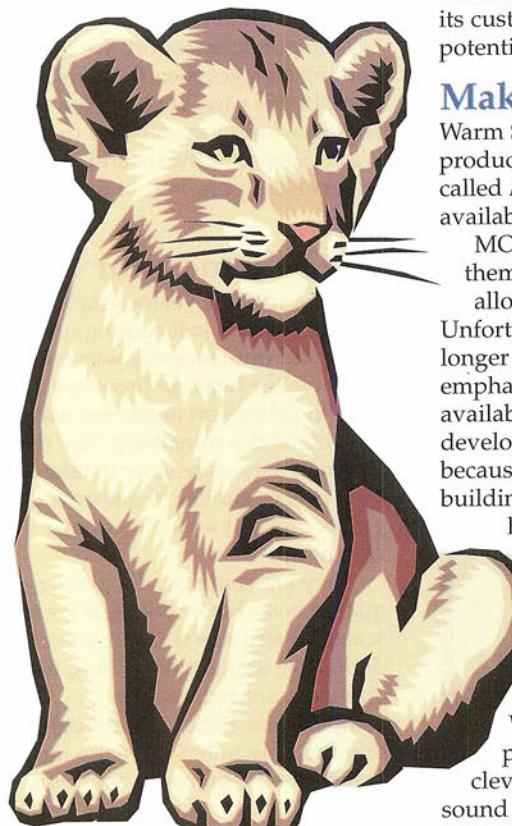


Figure IV: SVG to Draw to Artworks to Illustrator...



Figure V: Picasso rendered rather well

site a must for me.

The major drawback of sound on the Web is bandwidth. Sound (as .wav files) take up a whole load of space (a file may be greater than 10Mb to play a 60 second sound) and so the time to actually download the sounds will take far longer than the sound plays for – not a problem if you've a mega-fast connection (such as the one offered by Spacetech, or if you've a direct UK university link with a speed of near to 4Mbits /second), but as most people have only around a 56K modem which, with the UK phone system being under the strain it currently is, may only drag in roughly half that, the actual online use is limited.

It does, however, work very well when used offline. (Try this month's *Acorn User CD*). These two plug-ins are certainly worth their money, the SVG more so, but with faster and faster connection and line speeds, the audio plug-in will also come into its own.

END

Product details

Product:	SVG and Sound plug-ins
Price:	£10 each
Supplier:	Warm Silence Software, PO Box 28, Woodstock, Oxfordshire, OX20 1XX
Tel:	(+44/0) 1608 737172
or:	(+44/0) 1585 487642
Web:	www.wss.co.uk
E-mail:	info@wss.co.uk

Liquid Silicon



32-bit MIDI Sequencer

Powerful Flexible

Easy to use drag & drop
Controller maps (e.g.
tempo and velocity)
easily alterable by
drawing with the mouse
Patterns can be linked to
reflect changes made to
other patterns
Handles System Exclusives
Multitasking playback
Supports a 32 MIDI
interface, including
parallel and serial
Up to 128 MIDI channels
and no track limit
Free demo disc available
Now available - £129.00

MELIDI

— Recent/New Releases —
Kinetic Risc PCs.
Scorcher & EPOS systems.
Mico systems.
ViewFinder graphics card.
Overload & TBA CD games



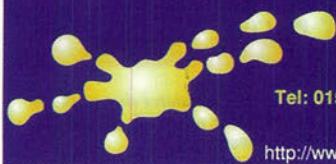
Discs (example 10x white discs - £4.99, 50x black discs - £13.99,
5x HD red/blue/green/white discs - £2.49)
Batteries (e.g. 4x AA Xtra alkaline - £1.96, 1x 9V alkaline - £1.92)
Also Audio & Video Tapes, Mini Discs, CDRs, DAT tapes etc.

FREEPOST EH2725
Kirkcaldy, Fife, KY2 5BR
United Kingdom

Tel: 01592 592265 Fax: 01592 596102

email: Liquid@cableinet.co.uk

http://www.cybervillage.co.uk/acorn/liquid/



• Computers & Music Hardware • Upgrades • Software • Cables etc.

We supply a range of CCD and laser bar code scanners which include our iBarReader driver software to allow bar codes to control most desktop software.

Further information is available.
Complete systems from £137.63

Our bar coding software produces Draw files of the following formats: EAN 8, EAN 13, UPC A, ISBN, ISSN, Code 39 (Normal and Full ASCII), Telepen and Binary.

Further information is available.
iBarCoder - £69.33

Computer Systems

These prices do not include monitors, unless specified.

Risc PC 8+0MB 2Gb HD - £879.00
Risc PC 32+2Mb 8Gb, DVD CD - £1089.00
Web Wizard - 32+2Mb, 8Gb HD, CD drive, speakers, Resultz, Easewriter Pro, 56K modem, Internet Suite - £1169.00
Kinetic Risc PC - £1399.00
A7000+ Odyssey CD - 16Mb, 4Gb, 40x - £655.00
A7000+ Odyssey Primary/Secondary - 16Mb, 4Gb HD, 40x CD & software - £713.00
A7000+ Odyssey Surf - 24Mb, 4Gb, DVD CD, 56K modem, ANT Suite - £831.00
"Sprinter" NC system - 10baseT, 16Mb, 15" monitor, keyboard & mouse - £442.00
Microdigital Mico - ECall RiscStation R7500 Lite - From £598.00

Monitors

iyama 350 (15") - £170.00
iyama 404 (17") - £283.00
iyama Pro 410 (17") - £319.00
iyama 451 (19") - £435.00
iyama Pro 450 (19") - £472.00
iyama 502 (21") - £749.00
iyama Pro 510 (22") - £772.00
iyama Pro-Lite 36c 14.1" LCD - £807.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38e 15" LCD - £936.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38i 15" LCD - £995.00
iyama Pro-Lite 39a 15" LCD - £1599.00
iyama Pro-Lite 46a 18" LCD - £2469.00
Touchscreen monitors coming soon.

Monitors

iyama 350 (15") - £170.00
iyama 404 (17") - £283.00
iyama Pro 410 (17") - £319.00
iyama 451 (19") - £435.00
iyama Pro 450 (19") - £472.00
iyama 502 (21") - £749.00
iyama Pro 510 (22") - £772.00
iyama Pro-Lite 36c 14.1" LCD - £807.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38e 15" LCD - £936.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38i 15" LCD - £995.00
iyama Pro-Lite 39a 15" LCD - £1599.00
iyama Pro-Lite 46a 18" LCD - £2469.00
Touchscreen monitors coming soon.

Monitors

iyama 350 (15") - £170.00
iyama 404 (17") - £283.00
iyama Pro 410 (17") - £319.00
iyama 451 (19") - £435.00
iyama Pro 450 (19") - £472.00
iyama 502 (21") - £749.00
iyama Pro 510 (22") - £772.00
iyama Pro-Lite 36c 14.1" LCD - £807.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38e 15" LCD - £936.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38i 15" LCD - £995.00
iyama Pro-Lite 39a 15" LCD - £1599.00
iyama Pro-Lite 46a 18" LCD - £2469.00
Touchscreen monitors coming soon.

Monitors

iyama 350 (15") - £170.00
iyama 404 (17") - £283.00
iyama Pro 410 (17") - £319.00
iyama 451 (19") - £435.00
iyama Pro 450 (19") - £472.00
iyama 502 (21") - £749.00
iyama Pro 510 (22") - £772.00
iyama Pro-Lite 36c 14.1" LCD - £807.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38e 15" LCD - £936.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38i 15" LCD - £995.00
iyama Pro-Lite 39a 15" LCD - £1599.00
iyama Pro-Lite 46a 18" LCD - £2469.00
Touchscreen monitors coming soon.

Monitors

iyama 350 (15") - £170.00
iyama 404 (17") - £283.00
iyama Pro 410 (17") - £319.00
iyama 451 (19") - £435.00
iyama Pro 450 (19") - £472.00
iyama 502 (21") - £749.00
iyama Pro 510 (22") - £772.00
iyama Pro-Lite 36c 14.1" LCD - £807.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38e 15" LCD - £936.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38i 15" LCD - £995.00
iyama Pro-Lite 39a 15" LCD - £1599.00
iyama Pro-Lite 46a 18" LCD - £2469.00
Touchscreen monitors coming soon.

Monitors

iyama 350 (15") - £170.00
iyama 404 (17") - £283.00
iyama Pro 410 (17") - £319.00
iyama 451 (19") - £435.00
iyama Pro 450 (19") - £472.00
iyama 502 (21") - £749.00
iyama Pro 510 (22") - £772.00
iyama Pro-Lite 36c 14.1" LCD - £807.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38e 15" LCD - £936.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38i 15" LCD - £995.00
iyama Pro-Lite 39a 15" LCD - £1599.00
iyama Pro-Lite 46a 18" LCD - £2469.00
Touchscreen monitors coming soon.

Monitors

iyama 350 (15") - £170.00
iyama 404 (17") - £283.00
iyama Pro 410 (17") - £319.00
iyama 451 (19") - £435.00
iyama Pro 450 (19") - £472.00
iyama 502 (21") - £749.00
iyama Pro 510 (22") - £772.00
iyama Pro-Lite 36c 14.1" LCD - £807.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38e 15" LCD - £936.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38i 15" LCD - £995.00
iyama Pro-Lite 39a 15" LCD - £1599.00
iyama Pro-Lite 46a 18" LCD - £2469.00
Touchscreen monitors coming soon.

Monitors

iyama 350 (15") - £170.00
iyama 404 (17") - £283.00
iyama Pro 410 (17") - £319.00
iyama 451 (19") - £435.00
iyama Pro 450 (19") - £472.00
iyama 502 (21") - £749.00
iyama Pro 510 (22") - £772.00
iyama Pro-Lite 36c 14.1" LCD - £807.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38e 15" LCD - £936.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38i 15" LCD - £995.00
iyama Pro-Lite 39a 15" LCD - £1599.00
iyama Pro-Lite 46a 18" LCD - £2469.00
Touchscreen monitors coming soon.

Monitors

iyama 350 (15") - £170.00
iyama 404 (17") - £283.00
iyama Pro 410 (17") - £319.00
iyama 451 (19") - £435.00
iyama Pro 450 (19") - £472.00
iyama 502 (21") - £749.00
iyama Pro 510 (22") - £772.00
iyama Pro-Lite 36c 14.1" LCD - £807.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38e 15" LCD - £936.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38i 15" LCD - £995.00
iyama Pro-Lite 39a 15" LCD - £1599.00
iyama Pro-Lite 46a 18" LCD - £2469.00
Touchscreen monitors coming soon.

Monitors

iyama 350 (15") - £170.00
iyama 404 (17") - £283.00
iyama Pro 410 (17") - £319.00
iyama 451 (19") - £435.00
iyama Pro 450 (19") - £472.00
iyama 502 (21") - £749.00
iyama Pro 510 (22") - £772.00
iyama Pro-Lite 36c 14.1" LCD - £807.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38e 15" LCD - £936.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38i 15" LCD - £995.00
iyama Pro-Lite 39a 15" LCD - £1599.00
iyama Pro-Lite 46a 18" LCD - £2469.00
Touchscreen monitors coming soon.

Monitors

iyama 350 (15") - £170.00
iyama 404 (17") - £283.00
iyama Pro 410 (17") - £319.00
iyama 451 (19") - £435.00
iyama Pro 450 (19") - £472.00
iyama 502 (21") - £749.00
iyama Pro 510 (22") - £772.00
iyama Pro-Lite 36c 14.1" LCD - £807.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38e 15" LCD - £936.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38i 15" LCD - £995.00
iyama Pro-Lite 39a 15" LCD - £1599.00
iyama Pro-Lite 46a 18" LCD - £2469.00
Touchscreen monitors coming soon.

Monitors

iyama 350 (15") - £170.00
iyama 404 (17") - £283.00
iyama Pro 410 (17") - £319.00
iyama 451 (19") - £435.00
iyama Pro 450 (19") - £472.00
iyama 502 (21") - £749.00
iyama Pro 510 (22") - £772.00
iyama Pro-Lite 36c 14.1" LCD - £807.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38e 15" LCD - £936.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38i 15" LCD - £995.00
iyama Pro-Lite 39a 15" LCD - £1599.00
iyama Pro-Lite 46a 18" LCD - £2469.00
Touchscreen monitors coming soon.

Monitors

iyama 350 (15") - £170.00
iyama 404 (17") - £283.00
iyama Pro 410 (17") - £319.00
iyama 451 (19") - £435.00
iyama Pro 450 (19") - £472.00
iyama 502 (21") - £749.00
iyama Pro 510 (22") - £772.00
iyama Pro-Lite 36c 14.1" LCD - £807.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38e 15" LCD - £936.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38i 15" LCD - £995.00
iyama Pro-Lite 39a 15" LCD - £1599.00
iyama Pro-Lite 46a 18" LCD - £2469.00
Touchscreen monitors coming soon.

Monitors

iyama 350 (15") - £170.00
iyama 404 (17") - £283.00
iyama Pro 410 (17") - £319.00
iyama 451 (19") - £435.00
iyama Pro 450 (19") - £472.00
iyama 502 (21") - £749.00
iyama Pro 510 (22") - £772.00
iyama Pro-Lite 36c 14.1" LCD - £807.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38e 15" LCD - £936.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38i 15" LCD - £995.00
iyama Pro-Lite 39a 15" LCD - £1599.00
iyama Pro-Lite 46a 18" LCD - £2469.00
Touchscreen monitors coming soon.

Monitors

iyama 350 (15") - £170.00
iyama 404 (17") - £283.00
iyama Pro 410 (17") - £319.00
iyama 451 (19") - £435.00
iyama Pro 450 (19") - £472.00
iyama 502 (21") - £749.00
iyama Pro 510 (22") - £772.00
iyama Pro-Lite 36c 14.1" LCD - £807.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38e 15" LCD - £936.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38i 15" LCD - £995.00
iyama Pro-Lite 39a 15" LCD - £1599.00
iyama Pro-Lite 46a 18" LCD - £2469.00
Touchscreen monitors coming soon.

Monitors

iyama 350 (15") - £170.00
iyama 404 (17") - £283.00
iyama Pro 410 (17") - £319.00
iyama 451 (19") - £435.00
iyama Pro 450 (19") - £472.00
iyama 502 (21") - £749.00
iyama Pro 510 (22") - £772.00
iyama Pro-Lite 36c 14.1" LCD - £807.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38e 15" LCD - £936.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38i 15" LCD - £995.00
iyama Pro-Lite 39a 15" LCD - £1599.00
iyama Pro-Lite 46a 18" LCD - £2469.00
Touchscreen monitors coming soon.

Monitors

iyama 350 (15") - £170.00
iyama 404 (17") - £283.00
iyama Pro 410 (17") - £319.00
iyama 451 (19") - £435.00
iyama Pro 450 (19") - £472.00
iyama 502 (21") - £749.00
iyama Pro 510 (22") - £772.00
iyama Pro-Lite 36c 14.1" LCD - £807.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38e 15" LCD - £936.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38i 15" LCD - £995.00
iyama Pro-Lite 39a 15" LCD - £1599.00
iyama Pro-Lite 46a 18" LCD - £2469.00
Touchscreen monitors coming soon.

Monitors

iyama 350 (15") - £170.00
iyama 404 (17") - £283.00
iyama Pro 410 (17") - £319.00
iyama 451 (19") - £435.00
iyama Pro 450 (19") - £472.00
iyama 502 (21") - £749.00
iyama Pro 510 (22") - £772.00
iyama Pro-Lite 36c 14.1" LCD - £807.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38e 15" LCD - £936.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38i 15" LCD - £995.00
iyama Pro-Lite 39a 15" LCD - £1599.00
iyama Pro-Lite 46a 18" LCD - £2469.00
Touchscreen monitors coming soon.

Monitors

iyama 350 (15") - £170.00
iyama 404 (17") - £283.00
iyama Pro 410 (17") - £319.00
iyama 451 (19") - £435.00
iyama Pro 450 (19") - £472.00
iyama 502 (21") - £749.00
iyama Pro 510 (22") - £772.00
iyama Pro-Lite 36c 14.1" LCD - £807.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38e 15" LCD - £936.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38i 15" LCD - £995.00
iyama Pro-Lite 39a 15" LCD - £1599.00
iyama Pro-Lite 46a 18" LCD - £2469.00
Touchscreen monitors coming soon.

Monitors

iyama 350 (15") - £170.00
iyama 404 (17") - £283.00
iyama Pro 410 (17") - £319.00
iyama 451 (19") - £435.00
iyama Pro 450 (19") - £472.00
iyama 502 (21") - £749.00
iyama Pro 510 (22") - £772.00
iyama Pro-Lite 36c 14.1" LCD - £807.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38e 15" LCD - £936.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38i 15" LCD - £995.00
iyama Pro-Lite 39a 15" LCD - £1599.00
iyama Pro-Lite 46a 18" LCD - £2469.00
Touchscreen monitors coming soon.

Monitors

iyama 350 (15") - £170.00
iyama 404 (17") - £283.00
iyama Pro 410 (17") - £319.00
iyama 451 (19") - £435.00
iyama Pro 450 (19") - £472.00
iyama 502 (21") - £749.00
iyama Pro 510 (22") - £772.00
iyama Pro-Lite 36c 14.1" LCD - £807.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38e 15" LCD - £936.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38i 15" LCD - £995.00
iyama Pro-Lite 39a 15" LCD - £1599.00
iyama Pro-Lite 46a 18" LCD - £2469.00
Touchscreen monitors coming soon.

Monitors

iyama 350 (15") - £170.00
iyama 404 (17") - £283.00
iyama Pro 410 (17") - £319.00
iyama 451 (19") - £435.00
iyama Pro 450 (19") - £472.00
iyama 502 (21") - £749.00
iyama Pro 510 (22") - £772.00
iyama Pro-Lite 36c 14.1" LCD - £807.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38e 15" LCD - £936.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38i 15" LCD - £995.00
iyama Pro-Lite 39a 15" LCD - £1599.00
iyama Pro-Lite 46a 18" LCD - £2469.00
Touchscreen monitors coming soon.

Monitors

iyama 350 (15") - £170.00
iyama 404 (17") - £283.00
iyama Pro 410 (17") - £319.00
iyama 451 (19") - £435.00
iyama Pro 450 (19") - £472.00
iyama 502 (21") - £749.00
iyama Pro 510 (22") - £772.00
iyama Pro-Lite 36c 14.1" LCD - £807.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38e 15" LCD - £936.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38i 15" LCD - £995.00
iyama Pro-Lite 39a 15" LCD - £1599.00
iyama Pro-Lite 46a 18" LCD - £2469.00
Touchscreen monitors coming soon.

Monitors

iyama 350 (15") - £170.00
iyama 404 (17") - £283.00
iyama Pro 410 (17") - £319.00
iyama 451 (19") - £435.00
iyama Pro 450 (19") - £472.00
iyama 502 (21") - £749.00
iyama Pro 510 (22") - £772.00
iyama Pro-Lite 36c 14.1" LCD - £807.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38e 15" LCD - £936.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38i 15" LCD - £995.00
iyama Pro-Lite 39a 15" LCD - £1599.00
iyama Pro-Lite 46a 18" LCD - £2469.00
Touchscreen monitors coming soon.

Monitors

iyama 350 (15") - £170.00
iyama 404 (17") - £283.00
iyama Pro 410 (17") - £319.00
iyama 451 (19") - £435.00
iyama Pro 450 (19") - £472.00
iyama 502 (21") - £749.00
iyama Pro 510 (22") - £772.00
iyama Pro-Lite 36c 14.1" LCD - £807.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38e 15" LCD - £936.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38i 15" LCD - £995.00
iyama Pro-Lite 39a 15" LCD - £1599.00
iyama Pro-Lite 46a 18" LCD - £2469.00
Touchscreen monitors coming soon.

Monitors

iyama 350 (15") - £170.00
iyama 404 (17") - £283.00
iyama Pro 410 (17") - £319.00
iyama 451 (19") - £435.00
iyama Pro 450 (19") - £472.00
iyama 502 (21") - £749.00
iyama Pro 510 (22") - £772.00
iyama Pro-Lite 36c 14.1" LCD - £807.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38e 15" LCD - £936.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38i 15" LCD - £995.00
iyama Pro-Lite 39a 15" LCD - £1599.00
iyama Pro-Lite 46a 18" LCD - £2469.00
Touchscreen monitors coming soon.

Monitors

iyama 350 (15") - £170.00
iyama 404 (17") - £283.00
iyama Pro 410 (17") - £319.00
iyama 451 (19") - £435.00
iyama Pro 450 (19") - £472.00
iyama 502 (21") - £749.00
iyama Pro 510 (22") - £772.00
iyama Pro-Lite 36c 14.1" LCD - £807.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38e 15" LCD - £936.00
iyama Pro-Lite 38i 15" LCD - £995.00
iyama Pro-Lite 39a 15" LCD - £1599.00
iyama Pro-Lite 46a 18" LCD - £2469.00
Touchscreen monitors coming soon.

Monitors

iyama 350 (15") - £170.00
iyama 404 (17") - £283.00
iyama Pro 410 (17") - £319.00
iyama 451 (19") - £435.00
iyama Pro 450 (1

RISC World

RISC World
39 Knighton Park Road
Sydenham
London SE26 5RN

Phone: 0181 778 2659
Fax: 0181 488 0487
subscriptions@riscworld.com
www.riscworld.com

3.5" IDE Hard Discs		
540 Mb	£45	£92
1.2 Gb	£53	£100
2.1 Gb	£69	£116
3.2 Gb	£73	£120
4.2 Gb	£79	£126
6.3 Gb	£81	£128
10 Gb	£89	£136
12.7 Gb	£98	£145
13.4 Gb 5400	£102	£149
15 Gb	£99	£146
16.8 Gb	£108	£155
20 Gb 5400	£110	£157
20 Gb 7200	£132	£179
26.7 Gb	£165	£212
36.6 Gb	£239	£286
18.8 Gb 5"	£112	£159

*Plus 'iface' price includes an APDL fast IDE interface

Blitz
ideA

Lightning fast IDE interface for your Risc PC. All the features of our normal fast interface but up to 7 Mb/sec. Only £119 or just £109 when purchased with a drive.

Blitz + RISC OS 4 + drive, just £220 + cost of hard drive

2.5" IDE Hard Discs

	3000/3010	A3020
120 Mb	£99	£49
170 Mb	£104	£54
210 Mb	£109	£59
250 Mb	£112	£62
330 Mb	£119	£69
420 Mb	£123	£73
1.8 Gb	£129	£79

A3020 includes fitting kit, 3010/3000 includes APDL IDE iface

IDE CD ROM drives

	Internal	External
44x	£41	£147
48/50x	£44	£150

Add just £47 to Internal price for an APDL fast IDE interface. External price includes an IDE interface for any type of machine

SCSI drives

210 Mb	£27	
420 Mb	h/h	£45
4.2 Gb	h/h	£115
4.2 Gb	1" high	£137

Have you heard about the new magazine *RISC World*? It's on a CD.

Yeah, but if it's on a CD it'll be full of old demos, out of date games and stuff like that.

No, it's a proper magazine, it's on a CD 'cos that keeps the price down now printing and postage costs so much. And on a CD articles and reviews can be bigger and more detailed with lots of screenshots. With a printed mag – especially if it's in colour – the more pages, the more it costs to print.

But it's bi-monthly, not monthly like the others. By the time we get it the news will be out of date.

So when did you last get the hot news from a magazine? You get it from the net, then see the mags to find out more. So six big issues instead of twelve little ones makes sense.

S'pose so, but if it's being published by APDL it's probably going to be full of articles about them and all the stuff they do and anything competing won't get mentioned.

No chance. It's completely separate from APDL, with its own editor. David Matthewman. He knows what he's doing and won't let APDL interfere. APDL are just putting up the money and sending out the CDs. Daft, if you ask me. I don't see how they can do it for only £17.90 a year. They'll probably lose a fortune. Anyway, I'm not giving up my Acorn User subscription.

No chance, neither am I. But are you going to get *RISC World*?

Already sent off my money. At that price, I can afford both.

Yeah, me too. At £17.90 for six CDs you'd be a fool not to, wouldn't you?

RISC World is the new bi-monthly CD magazine for RISC OS computers.

It costs just £17.90* per year.

You'd be a fool not to....

* £19.90 outside UK

PD, Shareware and low cost hardware and software for Acorn computers

APDL

As well as all this we have thousands of discs of PD and Shareware and around 500 discs of Acorn format clip art. For a full catalogue send 50p or two 1st class stamps



All prices include VAT and UK carriage except hard drives add £6 for internal drives, £8 external

APDL Public Domain and other CDs

APDL PD-1	£12.50	Over 800 programs and utilities. No games, clip art, music, etc.
APDL PD-2	£12.50	Over 700 games, novelties, cheats, demos, sound, music, etc.
DTP-1, DTP-2	£7.90	Each has over 500 Mb of clip art, ready to use in Acorn format
DTP-3	£12.50	Highly acclaimed clip art CD with more than 720 Mb.
DTP-4	£14.90	Latest clip art CD with around 13,000 files. Great for schools!
Fantasy Pictures	£7.90	By request, from the Fantasy section of the APDL catalogue
The Grafix CD	£7.90	1000's of pictures, backgrounds, buttons, and much more
Games CD-1	£7.90	20 of the best PD games ready to play direct from the CD
Games CD-s	£7.90	Games I was so popular we've done it again. 20 more games.
Skullsoft collection	£9.90	Great budget price games CD with !Arya, !Xenocide and !Plig
Soft Rock collection	£9.90	Six classic games by Soft Rock, plus a new version of !Trellis
Ergane	£7.90	Translating dictionary for over 50 languages by David O'Shea.
Earth Data	£9.90	Geographical database with lots of statistics, plus !Earthmap
Earth in Space	£9.90	Pictures, databases, a huge amount of information about the solar system and galaxy at a sensible price
Wizard Apprentice	£7.90	Highly acclaimed multi-level game. Risc PC only.
New low price	£7.90	A CD especially for schools. More than 300 useful programs, over 5,000 specially selected clip art files, hundreds of classic novels, multi-media, educational games and lots more.
Education Resources	£12.50	

APDL ideA fast IDE interface

- No complicated setting up. It's self-configuring so just plug it in!
- Uses DMA on Risc PC. Over twice as fast as the built in IDE interface.
- Includes CDFS and ATAPI CD drivers for many popular CD ROMs.
- Four devices, any combination of CDs and hard drives.
- Up to 8 partitions, so you can have large drives on pre RO 3.6 machines
- Software in flash EEPROM for easy update.
- Connectors are available for external drives or CD ROMs
- Fits A310, A400, A5000, A540, A7000 and any RiscPC.
- You can now use CDR or CDR/W drives with !CDBurn. No need for expensive SCSI interfaces and CD drives!

All these features for the incredible price of just £52
A version for A3000, A4000, A3010 or A3020 is available for £62



Data Safe - A new concept in backup and data security

DataSafe consists of an external case to hold a 3.5" IDE drive, connected to your machine's printer port. This gives a large capacity portable drive, movable between machines and locations. Ideal for backup, secure data storage and transport. All the features of our ideA card, partitioning, passwords, etc. Great for schools. Supply your own drive or we'll fit one for you. Prices start at £99 or with a 6.3Gb drive £180 or 10 Gb £189

DataSafe is highly praised, but there's been one criticism. People would like it smaller and lighter so carrying between home and office (or school) is even easier. So we've introduced the DataSafe 'mini'. With all the features of the standard version, this uses a 2.5" drive so it's very small, about 5" by 5" and less than 2" high, and weighing only about 14 ounces! Prices start at £109 without a drive or with a 1.8 Gb drive just £179

Datafile CDs

PD CD-3	£5.50
PD CD-4	£6.50
PD CD-5	£5.50

Software

Faster PC
The XT PC emulator that works on any machine with 2Mb £20

Powerbase
Great database. Does everything most people will ever need at a sensible price £15

Menubar
Superior pull-down menu system with lots of features £15

Tiger
Long filenames and more £15

Worktop
Switch between 30 desktops with a single mouse click £15

Locus
Powerful but very easy to use mathematical graph and analysis tool. Ideal for schools. £18

RiscPC RAM

8 Mb	£9
16 Mb	£26
32 Mb	£47
32 Mb	FP
64 Mb	EDO
64 Mb	£69
128 Mb	FP
128 Mb	£82
2 Mb VRAM	£139
1 to 2Mb VRAM exch.	£69
1 to 2Mb VRAM exch.	£49

Fast SCSI interface

Connect 32 SCSI. Up to 7Mb/sec Limited number at only £79

Ancestor+

The program for family historians and genealogists. Very easy to use. Imports !Ancestry I and II, !Family, CSV and GEDCOM and exports as GEDCOM or CSV. Can save as cross referenced HTML, with pictures, so you can pass data on to people who have a computer but no genealogy software, or upload to your web site. Powerful and flexible reporting and searching. Unlimited information storage, you aren't restricted to a few lines of text and a picture.

Ancestor+ is based on the program that Graham Crow was working on at the time of his death, which was a development of his original Ancestry. Price just £59
Upgrades from Ancestor I and Ancestor II available £59

It's good to talk

John Pettigrew says more

In my previous article (a few months back now) I talked about how to set up a mailing list on the Internet. These are very useful for discussing things with a group of friends but, if the group becomes too large or the messages too numerous, or if the people are spread widely round the world, it may be difficult to keep such a group going. In this case, you might want to create a newsgroup (yes, you really can) but how do you go about it?

This article gives a 'bare-bones' outline of how to create a major newsgroup; that is, a group belonging to one of the 'big-8' top-level hierarchies: comp, humanities, misc, news, rec, sci, soc and talk. These are the most widely available sets of newsgroups but there are others, including:

- national groups such as uk.* for the United Kingdom, de.* for Germany and aus.* for Australia;
- specialist groups such as biz.* for business and commercial discussion;
- the ubiquitous alt.* groups which can cover absolutely anything and usually do.

All new newsgroups, regardless of type, are created by sending a Newsgroup Control Message, which asks all newsreader administrators everywhere to create the new group. Depending on the hierarchy and who sent the message, servers can create the group automatically, pass the message on to a human administrator or reject it automatically. This is because most hierarchies have, by general agreement or custom, an 'official' source of control messages for that hierarchy.

Request for Discussion

The first thing to do is to submit a formal proposal (a Request for Discussion or RFD) to the moderator of the group news.announce.newgroups, who will

then post it to that group, to news.groups and to other newsgroups that have an interest. The proposal is then discussed for at least three weeks in news.groups.

You may need to revise and resubmit the RFD for another round of discussion or two before it is acceptable to the majority of people. The RFD should contain a charter for the group (what the group will be for) as well as the reasons for creating it. It shouldn't talk about the history of the topic that the group will address; you can give an outline in a separate article during the discussion if you want.

Call for Votes

Once the discussion is complete, the Usenet Volunteer Votetakers will appoint a neutral votetaker, who will post the Call for Votes (CFV) and conduct the vote. This is more properly called an 'interest poll', because it is judging whether there is sufficient interest to justify a group.

The CFV will be posted to news.announce.newgroups and any other groups that the original RFD was posted to. The CFV will also specify the voting period, which will be between 21 and 31 days. It will also tell people how to cast a vote, usually by sending an email with a clear, unambiguous vote message such as 'I vote for the group foo.bar as proposed' or 'I vote against the group foo.bar as proposed'.

Results of the vote

At the end of the voting period, the votetaker will post the results of the vote to news.announce.newgroups and the other groups to which the CFV was posted, including the email addresses of the votes received (to allow votes to be verified). After this, there is an obligatory five-day

waiting period. This gives everyone the opportunity to challenge any errors in the voter list or voting procedure.

Creating the group

For a group to be created, the vote has to fulfil certain conditions: there must be at least 100 more valid 'Yes' votes than 'No' votes, and at least two-thirds of the total votes must have been in favour of creating the group. Also, there must be no critical objections during the waiting period.

If the proposal passes, a newsgroup control message can be sent out. If it does not pass, the group cannot be created and you must wait at least six months before you can start all over again with a new RFD. If you still fail after a couple of tries, it's best to bow to the will of the majority.

Creating newsgroups is not terribly complicated but is rather tedious. If you want to do it, lurk on news.groups for a while to get a feel for the sorts of comments people make on proposals before submitting your own. Also, try reading some of the guides listed and elsewhere on the Net. As with everything it really does pay to do your research.

END

31

Creating an alt.* group

You post a suggestion to alt.config with your justifications. Listen to the suggestions and advice offered there and make any appropriate changes. When there are no significant objections, you can either post the newsgroups control message yourself or ask someone in alt.config to do it for you.

There is no official source of control messages in the alt hierarchy. However, if you try to create a group against significant objections, someone will probably post an remove group control message, so server administrators to remove a group. As with mainstream groups, read alt.config for a while before making your suggestion.

Guidelines: The Big Eight Newsgroup

Creation Process

www.eyrie.org/~eagle/faqs/big-eight.html

How to Format and Submit a New Group Proposal

web.presby.edu/~jtbell/usenet/newgroup/how-submit.faq

The beginners guide to creating new alt.* groups

usenet.cjb.net

UK Usenet Homepages

www.usenet.org.uk

What's on the

Broadly speaking, I like cover CDs, I really do. However, from time to time comments are made concerning aspects of the CD that makes me wonder if they aren't more trouble than they're worth.

Common ones are:

- Why don't we have everything archived?
- Why don't we have everything unarchived?
- Why can't I get the HTML front end (and web sites) to work?
- Why is the layout illogical?

Archive or not?

The question of whether or not to archive software on a cover CD is a vexing one. There are arguments for and against, so satisfying everyone's needs is awkward.

On an 800K disc it used to be necessary to archive simply to squeeze those last few precious bytes out of the disc. That's not often an issue on a cover CD, which isn't usually full enough for space to be a problem, although it may mean that there isn't room for the obvious solution; to offer both an archived and an unarchived version of the same software.

Archives are also useful for preserving the case of filenames, and for including any characters that the ISO9660 format can't cope with. Having all the filenames in upper case isn't really much of a hardship and, if it bothers you that much, Warm Silence Software's excellent CDROMFS can be used to translate all the filenames to the correct case. However, some programs use file names that don't translate to the ISO9660 character set (names with exclamation marks that aren't the first character are common culprits) and these either have to be archived or re-written for the CD.

Why is archiving a problem? Well, if you want to run the program, you either have to unarchive it by copying it to your hard drive, or you

have to run it direct from the archive by using *ArcFS* or *SparkFS* (*SparkPlug* or *Spark* won't do it). Unarchiving is a hassle, and running direct from an archive can be unreliable and eat up memory.

However, because some of you asked for it, I've added an extra directory called *Archived*. Here you will find all the programs neatly wrapped up, with a copy of *Spark* from David Pilling to help you to unarchive them.

Incidentally, on the AU CD 9 from the May 2000 issue, having all the software as archives would have shaved 100Mb off the final disc image size, although space constraints on that disc would have meant that we wouldn't have been able to include the unarchived programs as well. In the end, it was decided to do away with the archives for that issue.

HTML reading

If you have an up-to-date *!Boot* structure (by which I mean the one supplied with RISC OS 3.6 and above or the one on the AU CD 8) the read-only version of *Fresco* supplied on the CD will work fine. Prior to that, you will be missing the internet bits and pieces.

If you go to the *Internet* directory on the CD, you will find a *!Boot* application. If you are having problems, merge this with your current one and all should be well, but *do not* merge this with your current *!Boot* if you can already use the Internet or if the read-only *Fresco* already works – it will upset your system.

Illogical layouts

'Logic, my dear Zoe, merely allows one to be wrong with authority.' – Dr Who.

People who complain that the layout on the CD is 'illogical' rarely expand on this statement. I assume

Paul Johnson reveals all

that they think that it's so obvious what they mean that they don't have to point it out. People who *do* suggest alternative layouts always suggest ones that are logical when looked at from a particular viewpoint, but which would be incredibly confusing to me when I'm trying to find something on the disc.

That's the crux of the matter, of course. Whether or not you think a layout is 'logical' depends on whether or not you can slot the disc on the CD-ROM drive, open the root directory, and quickly find what you want. It is impossible to design a CD layout that will do this for everyone reading the CD, so the best that can be done is to design one that's internally consistent.

I've looked back at all the past AU CDs and they look 'logical' to me. Games are in the *Games* directory, software updates in the *Updates* directory and company/individual web sites are in the *Websites* directory. There are other ways of organising the information on the CD, of course, but it shouldn't be too hard to find what you're looking for on this layout. Should it?

On this CD

The tenth *Acorn User* CD-ROM has been designed to the 'Gamer's Paradise' disc. After a large amount of negotiation, cajoling and generally hassling until I'm blue in the face, this CD has no less than 19 ex-commercial (and one currently commercial) titles from the likes of Krisalis and Gremlin.

Put together, you're looking at around £500 worth of software. There is a broad range of games on the CD, with platformers (*Lemmings 2*, *Mad Professor Mariarty & Zool*), racing games (*BurnOut*), space invaders (*Xenon 2*) and sports games (*Premier Manager* and *Quest for Gold*) in amongst them. *Acorn User* is also

CD?

proud to have permission to include the classic *Karma - The Flight Trainer*. This is not the demo version, it is the full blown game.

Warning: while these games (contained in the *Karma* and *Ex-Commercial* directories) have been given over to *Acorn User* for the cover CD 10, they are still commercial applications and, as such, you are not permitted to make copies (other than to your hard drive) or transmit them electronically without the prior permission of the companies concerned. Any breach of this may result in prosecution by either Tau Press or the companies involved. You have been warned.

All the software here works under RISC OS 4 and StrongARM thanks to the tireless work of Alex Macfarlane Smith who has written the patches. If a game needs patching, the directory will have a patch in it (in a directory called *Patch*) which you need to merge with the original; we can't pre-merge them ourselves for licensing reasons.

Also on the CD are tonnes and tonnes of adventures and adventure writing software (*GTAC*, *Inform 6.1* and *Trellis*, the latter being another commercial package). If you enjoy using your mind rather than your fingers, then these will be for you.

Warm Silence Software being generous boids have allowed us to include demo versions of *Z80Em* and *6502Em* (the Spectrum and BBC

emulators). Even better than that, we have the BBC Lives archives here as well.

As previewed elsewhere, we have an exclusive demo version of the mega game, *Overload* from Paradise Software. Play this and buy the full game; you'll not go wrong.

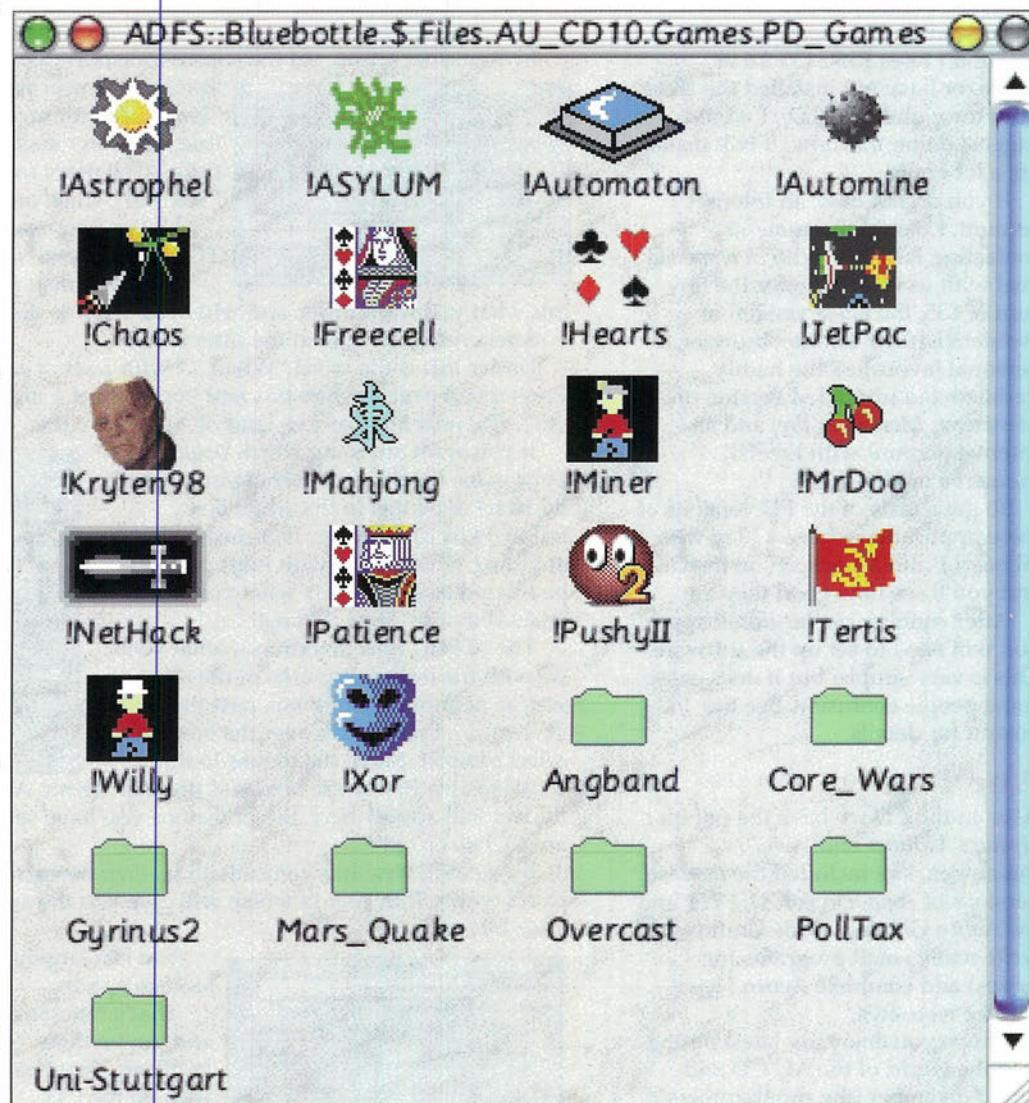
Finally, we have a large collection of PD Games. By 'large', I mean it's a shade under 40Mb and includes the

dungeons and dragons style game, *Angband* (with plenty of other flavours of the same game as well). I've added in a selection from the University of Stuttgart's ftp server for good measure (the full version of which is available on the China CDs - see the advert for more details).

Enough of the games, what else have we got this time?

Big brother

It's survey time again. Held inside the *Acorn_User* directory, you'll find the survey program. Please take the time to complete the survey and then either e-mail us the answers or send



A selection of PD games is included on the CD.

them in on a disc. The results are important to us, and are used to shape the future direction of the magazine, so your answers really can make a difference.

Also in the *Acorn_User* directory are the files which were either missing or corrupted from the clip-art and font directories on the last CD. Better late than never, as they say.

Getting wired

Speaking of being influenced by the survey data, it became apparent on the last survey how many of you have Internet access.

To that end, we have decided to include the very best of the public domain world on the CD with an easy to use installer (which must be run from the CD). If you do not have an up-to-date *!Boot* sequence (that is, you don't have RISC OS 3.6 or above, or have not installed the *!Boot* from the eighth AU CD), I would suggest doing this now; it will make life a lot easier.

If you do not have an Internet account, I would recommend contacting R-Comp, who in a special deal with us is offering for the tiny sum of £55, the latest version of *WebsterXL* (their Internet browser, a personal favourite), the highly updated and upgraded version of *Messenger*, *Messenger Pro*, and an Internet account with FreeUK, Freeserve or UKOnline.

To get a taste of the PD versions of these applications, have a play with *WebsterLT* and *Messenger* on the CD, and you'll see how good they are.

After running the *Int-install* app, you will need to set up the software. This is very simple, but it does cause some people confusion. See the boxout for details.

And finally...

Also on the CD we have the popular *Updates*, *Utilities* and *Websites* directories. I've included the newest versions of *Amp*, *DigitalCD*, *FTPc* and the Acorn Gaming, Code Craft (who write really small programs for prizes) and complete Acorn News Service web sites.

I hope you enjoy my latest outing into the world of the AU CD and until November (the programmers' resource CD), enjoy!

Setting up the software

First, open the *Internet* directory which has been created for you. Double-click on *NewsBase* to run it, then click on the *NewsBase* icon with the Menu mouse button (middle one). Select *Setup*.

Your choice of ISP (Internet Service Provider) will determine what you put in the hostname setup. No matter which ISP you are using, fill something in the Organization and tick the Lock to system tick box. Click *Save* when done.

The local users field is where you get to define who is using the software. It comes with a number of users already set up for you (which can usually be ignored). To add a user, click on *Add*. A new user window appears (left); type the user name here. When you click on *OK*, the user window appears. Fill in the "Reply to" box with your e-mail address, ensure the Mail Outbox, News Outbox and Filter cmd tick boxes are all ticked and you have something in the Organization text boxes.

When happy, click on *Set*. This closes the window.

If you're the only user, change all the mail settings (in the lower half of the window) to the user name you've just set up. When happy, click on *Save*.

In Transport set-up, set the source transport (top part of the window) and Transport (lower part of the window) to "local", default mail route to POPStar and select the new mail and new news selection boxes. The news route should be set as "internal". Click on *Save*.

Unless you need them, ignore the TCP/IP services.

In News/mail filters, you get to strain out what you want to see and what you want to dispose of.

Select *Add* and type in the filter name.

Under this is the word "When..." with a set of empty boxes next to it. Press menu over the first box and you will get a myriad of options. Select "to". The next box has a default of "=".

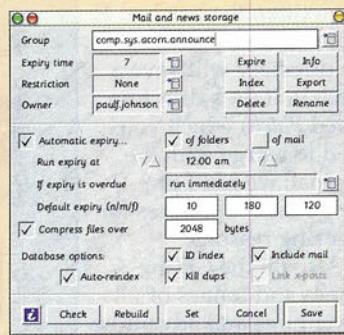
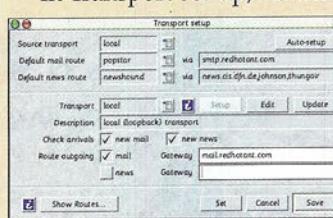
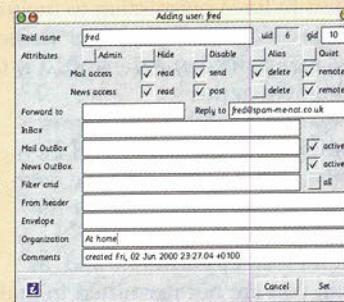
Leave this. If you want anything which begins with your name (or the first part of your e-mail address), type this in the white box followed by an asterisk. This means that anything which starts with (say) paul will be filtered as directed by what you have entered in the "Then..." area.

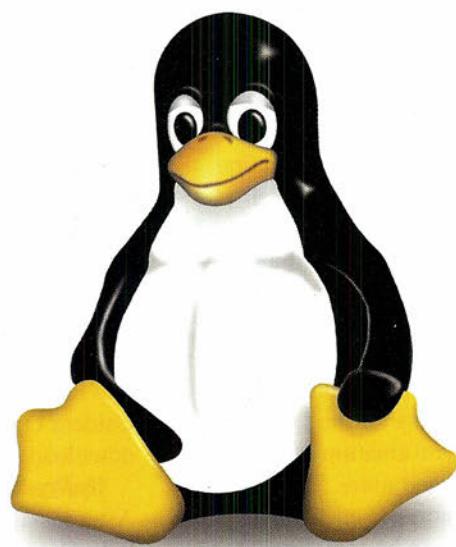
The "Then" area determines what you do with the e-mail. It works in the same was as defining the first box past the "When...". Press menu over the box and select *redirect*. Move the mouse to the writable area (the white box) and press on menu. All the available e-mail folders will appear here. Select the one you have set up in the "Local Users" area. Click on *Save*.

By default, *Newsbase* comes with its own newsgroup and nothing else. Don't worry. Run *Groups* which will give you the available newsgroups from your ISP.

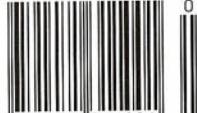
You can largely ignore the Mail & news storage options.

That's *NewsBase* set up, just click on *Save* and you're done. Setting up *Messenger*, *POPStar*, *NewsHound* and *Socketeer* is dealt with on the CD.





Linux News



Linux pilot

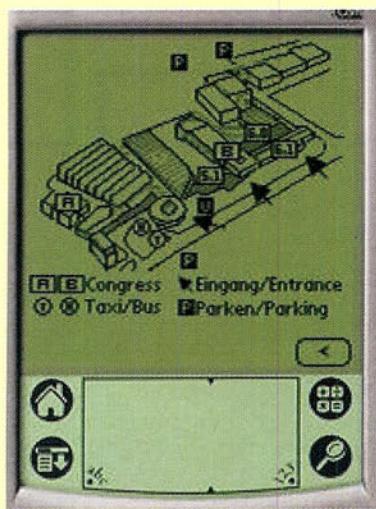
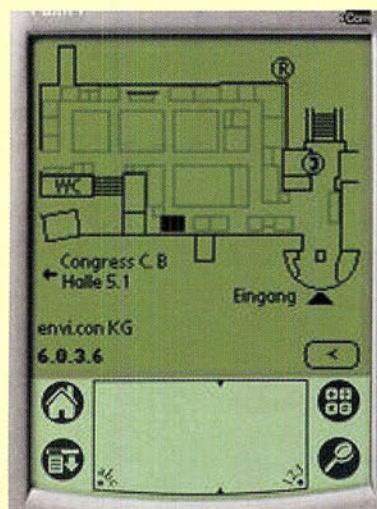
In cooperation with envi.con the LinuxTag organization presents an easy-to-use guide for the conference and expo LinuxTag in Stuttgart, Germany.

With all necessary information about the exhibition and the conference schedule the most popular handheld Palm Pilot organizer and compatibles is supported.

The electronic guide provides an index of all exhibitors with detailed information, a schedule of free talks and business congress notes, maps of the exhibition ground and the booths, information of services, travel facilities at the fair and more. The information system allows to add notes to each single exhibitor and talk entry. The dates can be transferred to the Palm Pilot calendar and all entries can be assigned to different categories.

During the event envi.con presents a Linux-driven upload server, with which the visitors can transfer the information software automatically to their device. Eight and more Palm Pilot devices can be served at one time.

The guide software also can be downloaded for free



from the Internet. It will be updated regularly until the event starts. The download link is:

www.envicon.de/e/palmguide/

To be able to transfer the files on a Linux machine to Palm Pilot devices, you need to install pilot-link, a package of Palm Pilot to Unix transfer utilities. You can find the package at all major Linux distribution sites like Red Hat Linux, SuSE Linux, Debian Linux, Caldera Open Linux and so on. If not, you can download it from:

[ftp://ryeham.ee.ryerson.ca/pub/PalmOS](http://ryeham.ee.ryerson.ca/pub/PalmOS)

After installation you can upload the LinuxTag PalmGuide files to your Palm Pilot by simply typing:

```
pilot-xfer -i linuxtag.prc  
linuxtagdb.pdb linuxtagvdb.pdb
```

and pressing the HotSync button on the device.

After the transfer you will see LinuxTag as a new application on Palm Pilot. Tap on the logo and you can browse the overview. If you tap on an entry you will see some more details.

Mandrake rooting for expansion

MandrakeSoft, the publisher of the popular Mandrake distribution of the Linux operating system, today announced the formation of a strategic alliance with Taiwanese motherboard manufacturer, Pro Team Computer Corp.

As a result of this alliance, Pro Team Computer Corp. will bundle and ship the Linux-Mandrake OS free with its AZZA motherboards beginning in the third quarter of this year. Pro Team Computer expects to ship

approximately 720,000 boards per year with Linux-Mandrake, mostly to the North American and Asian markets.

MandrakeSoft's Linux-Mandrake is considered to be one of the most user-friendly and powerful Linux distribution available today. It provides an excellent way for beginners to get started with Linux, yet still provides all the power and features required by experienced users.



SuSE goes large



Well okay, SuSE already is large – having 7% of the US market is big, really big and they have plans to go even further afield by releasing a fully engineered version of Linux for the Apple PowerPC, the IBM RS 6000 and Motorola PReP.

Said Dirk Hohndel, CTO of SuSE AG in Germany: "Customers have asked us to provide SuSE Linux on platforms other than x86. We added a version for the Alpha last year; PowerPC and the IBM S/390 were added this year. Other platforms will follow according to demand. Having SuSE Linux available on several platforms makes it easier for companies that are using a heterogeneous hardware environment to reduce administration costs.

"SuSE Linux is going to be available for the S/390 later this year. But all these projects are triggered by the same reasons – customers' demand for Linux on other platforms. Linux is now the only commercially viable OS that is available on the majority of today's hardware platforms. No other software environment can offer this

benefit." He continued: "We are committed to furthering SuSE Linux on all the platforms we support. Demand from our customer base helps us prioritize which platforms to add. The user profile of each platform is similar. Business users are looking for a reliable solution for their data center needs, and technically interested home users prefer a reliable, UNIX-type OS for their work.

"SuSE is available on multiple platforms: IBM S/390, IBM Netfinity running FailSafe, the Sun Ultra Sparc Server, the SGI Origin 2200 Server, Intel, Alpha, PowerPC, Arekia back-up solutions on Oracle, and Siemens 870 Primergies," Hohndel said.

With the new Macintosh distribution you can start MacOS from Linux and change from one to the other. Standard PCI hardware is supported.

With bucks for eyeballs the SuSE people noted the level of interest at Mac World 2000 and developed the more extensive PowerPC version: It has firewall scripts, Web servers, mail programs, video editors and the GIMP.

Barn doors (and bolted horses)

While most companies are beefing up their IT staff to combat increasingly vicious worms and viruses, most are leaving the end users out of the loop.

During the past month there have been a host of VBS worms released. The worms have ranged from fairly mild to down right devastating. These new methods of tricking users into opening attachments highlight the need for up-to-date computer training for end users. With the right training these types of attacks would have much effect.

In fact, about ninety percent of all computer problems occur because the end user has made a bad decision. Be it an accidentally opened file, the careless deletion of a file, or the installation of a poorly written software package, the end user is ultimately the culprit.

I have found that most companies with an IT staff are willing to spend a good deal of money in keeping their IT personnel up to speed, but give little regard to the people actually using the systems. It is absolutely

essential that end users receive at least basic computer and computer security training. In many cases the IT staff should be able to handle giving a one hour "quickie" training course. If not, there are a variety of companies that provide just this type of service.

Some topics to cover may include:

- Email attachments (when to open, and when NOT to open)
- Basic file types
- Telephone Security (how to prevent social engineering)
- Password security
- Logging off (some users may never log off the network)

The employees maintaining the network can go to great lengths to firewall, packet filter, and monitor the network. However, if an end user circumnavigates the precautionary measures setup, then none of that means squat. (www.HeavySecurity.com)



Linux at home

We've heard it all before, the computer in the home revolutionising the way we live our lives and so on and infinitum. Even in the 1950's – when they exaggerated a rate of development that was a mere fraction of what we have now – the computerised household was only a few years ago. Well it's happening again and I don't want to appear cynical but, well, I'll believe it when I see it.

Having said that I think the proposition from Adomo seems reasonable, for a change. They have taken a good hard look at what might actually be needed for a computerised home and come up with existing technologies that could fill that need: a set of different (and configurable) units that fill genuine needs. Filling real needs is crucial, it's far to easy to invent a solution that's in need of a problem.

So let's see, if you wanted an intra-home computer system what would you want it to be? First let's have a not-want, we don't want to have the house hardwired with network plugs in every room.

It's unsightly as you have to remodel your walls; it's expensive apart from the raw cost of wiring there's the potential need for re-decorating; it needs experts, okay, yes, us geeky types could probably do it ourselves but we're looking at consumer goods here; it's restrictive, once it's in you can't move it the computer goes where you put it or else it has to trail wires; and so on.

But that's a point: wires, trailing or otherwise, who needs them? Adomo bypassed the whole thing by declaring that they would have a wireless network. That's the first set of objections dealt with, and it means you can add or subtract units without any hassle.

Not only that but those units are essentially dumb, all the hard work is done by the dedicated unit in the cellar – or the lounge, it doesn't matter because this unit looks like a household appliance, in fact it looks like something out of the 50's. Looks like we've come full circle.

What we have are a set of remote, dumb terminals linked to a central server by the wireless network.

Adomo's approach can be summed up in three little words: keep it thin.

"As thin as possible", says Adomo CEO Samir Lehaff.

"We don't believe in having one general purpose platform that performs everything. Ideally, we'd like to have 'one button' dedicated devices distributed throughout the home."



By keeping the appliances simple they are smaller; cheaper to build; generate less heat; and run longer on a battery charge. In addition, having the application software run on a central server instead of on the appliance has some important advantages. Since the appliance is just an interface to the server, all the appliances can be used interchangeably. Just sign on and pick up where you left off.

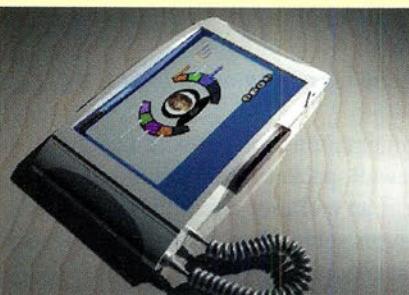
The only purpose of the appliance is to handle the input/output functions of the device. Each appliance runs a special small-footprint version of X Windows. All application programs execute on the server, and only display output (graphics, sound) and user input (keyboard/mouse, sound) travels back and forth between the server and client devices.

The central server must be powerful enough to handle the activities of all the client devices located throughout the home. In addition, the wireless network needs sufficient bandwidth to carry all the associated data transfers. Adomo claims the performance of their server device will support between four and eight "typical" family members (what's one of those I wonder), all using the system at once.

Interesting idea, but the fact remains that expenditure rises to meet resources so maybe their system will handle four family members at once – one wonders what the system degradation will be like if the demands on the system exceed its performance.

Video games are out, according to Adomo vice president of business development, Marc Prioleau. "In that case," says Prioleau, "you should plan to add a conventional PC to the system or, better yet, a specialized game machine." Many homes already have computers and the Adomo system provides an excellent opportunity to add a major league server to your existing home network – with the server providing connectivity, application sharing, file storage, and backup for all the devices.

And, as it runs Linux, it will be solid as a rock; provide excellent protection against outside hack-attack



– no mention is made of using it as a printer server but that's a given ... isn't it?

What problem?

I want music in the room I'm in – more accurately I want *my* music collection wherever I happen to be in the house. Currently we have three CD players, two are computer systems, and the other is a general one in the lounge. So if I want to listen to Bjork in the bath (where else) I'm stymied.

Must be a common problem because Adomo have their *AdomoTune* MP3 "outlet" that plays digital music from the server itself or from the Internet. Rather than give it integral speakers, it just acts as the portal to the server and plays through whatever equipment you have to hand. personally I think they'd have been better off making it a real player – less to cart around.

Naturally you can use the AdomoTune to select your playlist before setting it in going. Future options might include re-broadcasting Internet radio, then I could listen to a web-cast of the Archers while discussing the latest script in an apartment in LA.

That's a product I understand and can really go for, but since this system is designed to be a connection to the Internet you have to have a Web browser, and this comes in the form of the AdomoPad. Does your average family really browse the Web? I don't know any average families – and all the ones I know, do.

So obviously the 'Pad is an essential appliance, what we have here is a battery-operated, wireless, touchscreen pad that integrates a web browser and a telephone. The user can sit on the couch or roam around the house while checking e-mail, browsing the Web, or looking at digital photos. Cool, now there's a reason to own a digital camera beyond wanting to put family pictures on your Web site.

At your server

The server is basically a high-end PC running Linux. But Adomo has made the effort to make their server look more at home with the family. It looks like a storage box – which it more or less is. Though frankly I'd still prefer to put it somewhere out of the way, obviously the kitchen is a bad place – too much humidity. Under the stairs is an option, the loft probably suffers from too much temperature variation, hm, well I'm sure it would fit somewhere.

There's a motherboard based on an AMD mobile K6 processor. Adomo opted for a design that reduces power

consumption and heat dissipation,

compared in order to lessen the need for noisy fans and also to improve overall system reliability. Which is a frightening comment on how appallingly unreliable PC systems are – even when running something as nice as Linux. One wonders whether it was a cost-cutting exercise or just plain ignorance that prevented them choosing hardware that's more reliable.

Unsurprisingly you can add a monitor and keyboard and use it like a desktop system – with all the same programs available to the client devices.

Winging it

The first product to come out with the server is the general-purpose and nifty-looking Wing; connect it to a monitor, keyboard and mouse to make a PC. Connect it up to speakers, and it becomes a wireless music system.

Inside there's a 90 MHz Motorola Coldfire system-on-chip processor; VGA video controller (1024 x 768 pixels); connections for infrared keyboard/mouse, PS/2 mouse, microphone, and speakers.

The wireless LAN interface is just a standard PCMCIA card that plugs into the system other wireless technologies, or straight Ethernet, could be used.



Giving voice

Voice control is another holy grail of home systems that's been predicted for 50 years, maybe it's a throwback to the rural way of life when man's living servants were perfectly capable of following simple voice instructions – we've wanted the machines to do the same ever since.

The use of voice control is perfectly reasonable for home system though, we shout at the dogs, the kids and the TV – now we can have a something to shout at that will actually here us and do what we want ... perhaps.

Naturally the units don't process the voice, it's reduced in bandwidth (as in a phone channel) and passed across the network to the server. The ease of use makes it a price worth paying.

Product launch for the Adomo equipment is October 2000, they have the technology, they have the money, we'll now see whether they have the right idea. It would be nice for someone to get it right at last. Oh and as a final comment, Adomo are making the system open, so third party add-ons are a realistic option. That gives it an even better chance of success.



Mythology

Myth2 is the much awaited sequel to the original *Myth* game - which was itself heralded as a revolution in gameplay when it first hit the stores a couple of years ago. The sequel is set in the same time period although 60 years have passed since the 'Great War'. Alric (the heroic leader) is now the King in Madrigal and the armies have returned home.

During the course of the previous episode we saw the fall of Balor - the evil sorcerer with more than unhealthy obsession with the undead - however as everyone knows, things are never quite as simple as they seem where evil forces are concerned...

It turns out that one of Balor's evil minions survived the war and was freed from Balor's powerful magic. Soulblighter has been waiting ever since that time, slowly building up a powerful force of undead deranged zombies hard bent on doing his ghastly work.

In the game you play a warrior under the leadership of Cruniac, a brave commander, ever loyal to the King. The idea of the game is not a new concept; Bungie instead decided to enhance their last instalment with many flexible features and extensive character and map designs that produce a well-built, familiar whole. The guys at Loki are responsible for porting the game to Linux for all of penguinkind to enjoy.

Getting started

The game arrives in a nice, flashy box complete with flip cover, many screenshots, and even a penguin sticker. Inside you will find the manual and CD-ROM along with a very handy quick reference card.

To install the game, follow the instructions in the getting started section of the manual - making sure to log in as the root user before you proceed. While you have the manual open, have a browse; it's well constructed and will really help you to get a feel for the whole genre. The default installation options will be fine and the game will be installed in */usr/local/games* - if you're using a graphical environment such as KDE or GNOME, be sure to create a handy link.

At this point you will have a functioning game, so load it up.

Getting a feel for it

The game is extremely flexible and allows you to choose between single and multi-player modes; either standalone, over your LAN or the Internet.

I would seriously suggest that your first point of call is the practice level - it will give you a feel for the numerous controls at your disposal as well as the behaviour of your troops and their special features.

When you feel ready to take on Soulblighter, choose the new game option. The first time around you will only be able to play 'Willow Creek'; however, as you conquer more levels in single or multi-player mode, you will be able to select from them at this point.

One of the nice features is the diary entry that your character reads at the beginning of each level to tell you your mission objectives and to help you to get into the spirit that is a big part of playing *Myth*.

Through playing the game, you quickly discover the elaborate detail that the creators have gone to and just how complex the world of *Myth* really is. Your troops exhibit a certain amount of AI and will really help you form a strategic attack on the unsuspecting enemy. They will learn to become better soldiers with use and survivors from multiple battles will have veteran status; be sure to hang on to these troops, they are usually much better than the rest and should not be sacrificed readily.

Your weapons will damage pretty much anything you fire them at, right down to being able to kill both the peasants and wildlife as well as inflicting serious damage on the surroundings. This is not your regular 'shoot 'em up' Quake-like game and you will quickly learn that strategy is as much a part of the game as the fighting itself - much like in real life. The advice given about 'saving your game often' is very well founded and will usually allow you to recover from a critical mistake without having to play the whole level over.

Coherence and continuity are particularly prevalent in this game - each level follows on very well from the one preceding it as you slowly advance over the 'Civilised Lands' and wear down the evil onslaught. This is strangely satisfying and will result in all other life around you being temporarily ignored; you will loose friends over this obsession...

The game will quickly become challenging to even the most skilled game player - not through the violence levels that you will find in a game such as *Doom* (although they are there), but more through the very well-designed level maps and the open-ended way in which the game will leave you to complete the mission in whichever way you feel most appropriate. Usage of the overhead 'radar' is an absolute must, as it allows you to track your enemies. Just like pretty much every other battle game since Cavedog's *Total Annihilation*, the radar has a finite range limited by the position of your troops and each area of the map must be 'discovered' before it will show up on the scope.

Remember that you have two types of unit: short and long range. A bowman is useless over close ranges and will die very quickly, as will a dwarf. On the other



hand, warriors and giants are very useful for ground-based attacks of oncoming enemy thrall.

Single player is only a part of the overall action however, and the fun only really starts when you go online and face others on **bungie.net**. *Myth2* makes extensive use of on-line gaming and has many types of level devoted to it. My personal favourites are the 'Capture the flag' variants in which you must typically capture control of the flag by owning the troops nearest to it.

Other games involve playing collectively as teams against the computer generated enemy in the regular levels, as well as 'death match' for those who want large amounts of blood on their hands. The pre game 'chat' is a great way to get to know the other players and the game play is remarkably smooth over a dial-up connection – with occasional irritating exceptions. You bought the game; you're entitled to free membership of **bungie.net** – go get 'em!

The Cons

You will need a powerful machine to run this game. Although it will run on a Pentium processor, I would recommend at least a PII300 or faster. I would also very strongly suggest that everyone visit Loki Games' web site (<http://www.lokigames.com/>) and download the latest patches for *Myth2*. Please ensure that you download all the required patches and apply them in order. At the time of writing, the current patch will take you to version 1.3d (be sure to apply patches 1.3a to 1.3d) and will offer minor bug fixes as well as some useful functionality such as Alt+Enter switching between full screen and windowed mode (you will need to press scroll lock to release the mouse from the *Myth2* window and explore other parts of your desktop).

The game makes extensive use of the great work being done by the guys behind the SDL rendering library (a Linux equivalent of DirectX) to provide the actual graphics rendering but is faster if you have hardware acceleration.

Unfortunately, support for hardware acceleration under the 3.3.x series of *XFree86* is nowhere near as extensive as that for the newly emerging 4.x series. You will need to fiddle around with *glide* to get your 3dfx card working, but it is worth it if you have the hardware.

The game suffers from several irritating rendering bugs, including ungraceful handling of trying to go off the map and an occasional drawing problem with trees and shrubs which makes them appear a purplish colour at the very edge of the screen and is easy to confuse with a hidden enemy. The game doesn't even bother to attempt mounting of the CD-ROM and will simply crash if you have the *Myth2* CD in the drive but do not



have it mounted when you try to start a new game (possibly due to changes for compatibility with Mandrake's supermount).

Improvements are being made continuously, and I have every reason to think these issues will be corrected. As an example, the demo required to be executed with root privileges (something your office admin won't like you having) in order to do direct graphics but was later fixed to use the *vidmode* extension to X.

Loki Games

Loki have only been around for a short period of time, however, they have churned out a number of very popular Linux ports of mainstream games. They are very dedicated to the Free Software community and, while their games are proprietary, they have released various useful utilities on their Web site (such as a free MPEG player as used in *Myth2*) and are participating towards developments of software rendering, 3D audio and even (possible) DVD efforts under Linux. They are currently working on several ports and they appear to have a bright future ahead in the emerging Linux game market – after all, penguins have fun too, right?

Summary

Myth2 has been hugely successful on both the Windows, Mac and Linux (ia32 and ppc) platforms. This success is mainly due to the fact that this game is incredibly good – sure, it has 'issues', as indeed does every other game on the market. Overall however, Bungie did an excellent job at creating the world that is *Myth*, right down to the blades of grass, accurate physics of arrow firing and witty commentary given by the characters during game play. I would certainly recommend that you download the free (large) demo from the Loki website and have a go (hint: use the side door to the castle). Don't forget to try out the 'fear' and 'loathing' level creation tools too.

See you at **bungie.net**!



dot com



or, dot commiserate?

Choosing the correct Internet solution is very important. In the competitive world of e-business successful companies are the ones that keep and expand their client base. Abel's philosophy for Abel VISP (Virtual Internet Service Provider) is that businesses should be able to offer their clients a good quality, free Internet service whilst generating extra income.



Abel Internet, Pentland View House, Lothianburn, Edinburgh, EH10 7DZ
www.abelvisp.co.uk

Providers of dialup Internet access since 1990.



For Steve's benefit...

EESOX SCSI CARD £135

SCSI CD-REWRITER £245
Internal 8x4x32

SCSI CD-REWRITER £290
External

IDE CD-REWRITER £165
Internal 4x4x32

48x IDE CD-ROM £42



E&OE



Century House, Market Street
Swavesey, Cambs. CB4 5QG
Tel/Fax: 01954 208208

sales@eesox.com www.eesox.com



**PHR
COMPUTERS**

RiscStation | Registered Dealer

STRICTLY RISC OS

In East Anglia for any
new RISC OS computer
from RiscStation or
Acorn

Upgrades
Peripherals
Software
&
Support
For Older RISC OS Computers

55 Walcot Walk
Netherton
Peterborough
PE3 9QF
Tel.:
01733 343819
01733 754814
07713 500819



email : preid@enterprise.net

City Audio Services



CITY AUDIO SERVICES is based in Rochester in Kent, and has been using RISC OS hardware from the original A310. We're still RISC OS-based and now more actively involved in supporting the platform. CAS is primarily an audio company, working for clients including BBC World Service. But we're diversifying into software and hardware design too. And it's all RISC OS based!

For example we have two utilities for the i16 Irlam card under way: a record/playback utility that will sample for as long as you want and allow dub editing; plus we're supporting the development of a driver for use with Prosound/StudioSound – offering flexible and usable digital I/O on RISC OS.

As dealers we can help you with your computer needs – RISC OS, of course, but PCs too if that's what you want, and not just audio. But with our specialist experience in audio work, if that's your interest you can rely on us to give you straight forward practical advice based upon years of involvement in the RISC OS scene.

So if you are interested in RISC OS and audio – contact us now:

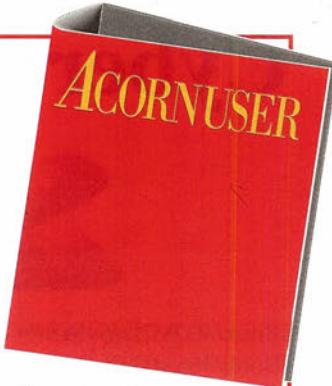
E-mail: cas@argonet.co.uk

Tel/fax: 01634 845378

Web: www.cityaudioservices.co.uk

Acorn User Binder Offer

Keep your issues of Acorn User in perfect condition with the Acorn User binder. These red binders with the Acorn User name embossed in gold are able to hold up to 13 issues of your favourite magazine.



ORDER FORM

YES! Please send me Acorn User Binders as follows:

1 only £7 or _____ binders at £6 each (excluding postage)

Total £ _____

Prices include VAT
Please add postage at
£2 per binder, UK
£3 per binder, Europe
£4 per binder, Rest of World

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Postcode..... E-mail

I wish to pay by:

Cheque/postal order (payable to Tau Press Ltd)
 Credit Card (Visa/Barclaycard/Mastercard/Access)

Credit Card No:

Expiry Date: / Name on card

AU0008

Send your order to: Tau Press, 26 Stockport Village, Hooper Street, Stockport SK1 1DQ

Please tick here if you do not wish to receive promotional information from other companies

EFF Professional 2 Cd Typography

To order a copy please contact us or return the coupon:

Order Form **EFF 2 Professional Typography Cd**

Name

Customer number (if known)

Address

..... Postcode

I'd like an upgrade (EFF1 Cd enclosed) / or a full copy.
 I require a private user licence and wish to pay: by card

exp. date or by cheque / P.O. (enclosed)

Signature Date

EFF 2 Professional Typography Cd

- 800 highest quality typefaces for Risc OS and Windows computers – the professional solution to cross-platform compatibility
- All fonts supplied in four formats: RISC OS 3, RISC OS Publisher, Windows TrueType and Windows PostScript
- Fonts grouped into traditional typographic categories: Old Style, Transitional, Modern, Slab Serif, Sans Serif, Flare Serif, Monospaced, Script, Blackletter, Display and Designer plus five bonus Pi fonts
- All fonts supplied in full Latin1 character set incl. Euro
- All fonts fully hand-hinted, with complete links and skeletons to ensure highest quality results on all media
- A source of information about typography, type history, fonts, alphabets and languages

EFF 2 Professional Typography Cd costs us follows:

EFF1Cd upgrade £49+p&p+vat (£59.84 UK incl.)

EFF2Cd full copy £99+p&p+vat (£118.09 UK incl.)

All prices are for single private user licence. Please contact us for educational and business licence prices.

Also available:

- individual fonts from EFF type library of over 1,300 typefaces for over 60 languages for RISC OS, Windows or Mac
- specialist and custom made fonts
- EFF TrueTypeTranslator (Windows font converter)
- EFF Type1 Translator (PostScript – Windows and Mac – font converter)
- EFF Font Table (an application for producing customised font tables)
- EFF1Cd (best selling 500 professional RiscOS fonts)

If you would like further information on any of our products, or have any questions, please contact us or visit our website, www.eff.co.uk

Cyberwave Computers & Pro-Audio



 **AppleCentre**

32-34 High Street Rottingdean Sussex BN2 7HR
 tel:01273 300702 fax:01273 300736

www.cyberwave.co.uk

iBook/300MHz/64MB/6GB/CD/56k Modem.Blueberry OR Tangerine.	£1078.00
iBook/366MHz/64MB/6GB/CD/56k Modem. SE Graphite Only.	£1199.00
iMac/350MHz/64MB/6GB/CD/56k Modem. Bondai Blue Only.	£694.00
iMac/400MHz/64MB/10GB/DVD/56k Modem. (All 5 Flavours).	£864.00
iMac/400MHz/128MB/13GB/DVD/56k Modem. SE Graphite Only.	£1114.0
PowerBook G3/400MHz/64MB/6GB/DVD/56k Modem. Jet Black.	£1714.00
PowerBook G3/500MHz/128MB/12GB/DVD/56k Modem. Jet Black.	£2414.00
G4 PowerMac/400MHz/64MB/10GB/DVD/56k Modem. Graphite	£1114.00
G4 PowerMac/450MHz/128MB/20GB/DVD/ZIP/56k Mod. Graphite	£1714.00
G4 PowerMac/500MHz/256MB/27GB/DVD-RAM/ZIP. Graphite	£2414.00

We are also dealers for RiscStation and can supply their full range of machines. SOFTWARE AND HARDWARE FOR OTHER ACORNS IS ALSO AVAILABLE TO ORDER. PLEASE CALL FOR PRICES.



ONLINE SHOPPING
 NOW AVAILABLE ON
 OUR WEBSITE

MAIL / TELEPHONE
 ORDERS WELCOME

**AUTHORISED RISC OS
 INSTALLER**

CyberWave offers all in customer Home Installation on all computers it sell, be it Acorns, Apples, RiscStations or PC. Home Tuition is also available for RISC OS, MAC OS or Windows, as well as training in a wide range of applications. CALL FOR MORE INFO.

OPENING SOON IS OUR FULLY EQUIPPED STATE OF THE ART MUSIC STUDIO & RECORDING AREA,
 demonstrating the full range of Pro-Audio equipment from leading manufacturers like
 MACKIE DIGITAL, LEXICON, MANLEY, MASENBURG, BRAUNER, AKZ, KS DIGITAL.

The New Millennium - not another badly-timed attempt to coerce you into thinking that we're already in the twenty-first century, but rather an updated version of iSV's popular design package. For those of you unfamiliar with the original, *DrawWorks Millennium* release, the CD comes with not only the eponymous graphic design aid but also a wealth of fonts and font utilities, clip-art and other extras: this new version offers more of the same, with even more goodies.

The graphics tools

The main program from which the suite takes its name (let's shorten it to *DWNM*) is not in itself a graphics package; rather it is an add-on to the standard RISC OS vector drawing package *Draw*. When you load *DWNM* it also fires up *Draw*, and opening a new *Draw* window you'll see a new double-height tool bar sitting across the top. The upper row breaks the program into sections (tools to do with colours, changing the view, file handling) while the lower has the individual controls (spot colour controls, view scale, file import tool and so on).

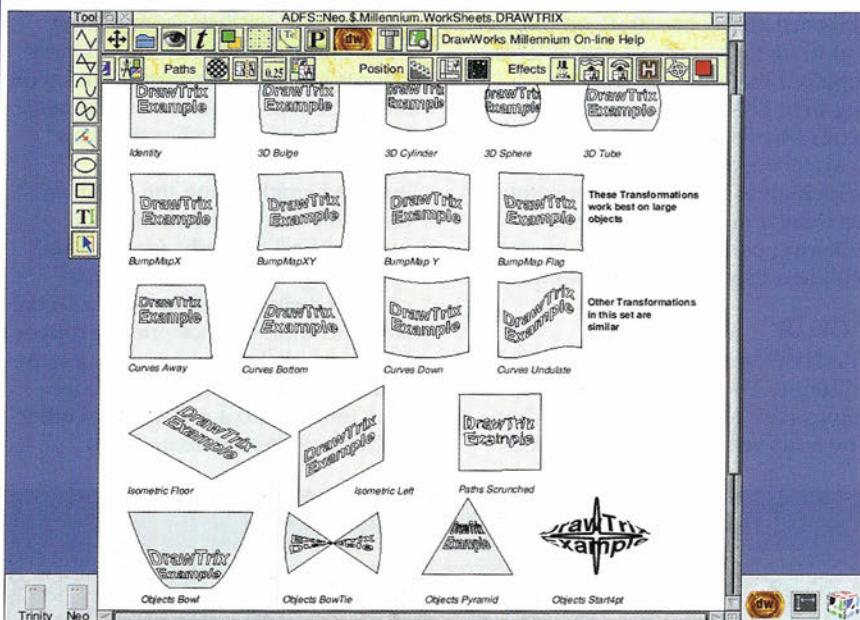
The tools provided range in complexity considerably. Some simply reproduce elements from within *Draw* itself; for instance, control over grids just moves the menu options to a more immediate place, and the ability to zoom in and out is an extension to the existing zoom function. Others are completely new, such as the advanced colour handling (tinting, using named colours and the like).

Sometimes there are a few too many tools; with a standard A4 sheet of virtual paper sometimes you get only half the tools on the screen at any one time, and as there's no scroll bar you have to wait for the tool bar to scroll back and forth at the usual pedestrian autoscroll pace. Even as it is though you've lost a chunk of usable space at the top of your *Draw* window; you can drag the tool bars off the *Draw* window altogether, but I can't help feeling that a better design could have been used, perhaps a properly free-floating window.

Concentrating on what *DrawWorks* gives over the standard *Draw* setup, there are two main areas that caught my eye; substantial improvements on

Works in progress

Richard Goodwin enters the New Millennium with the latest package from iSV Products



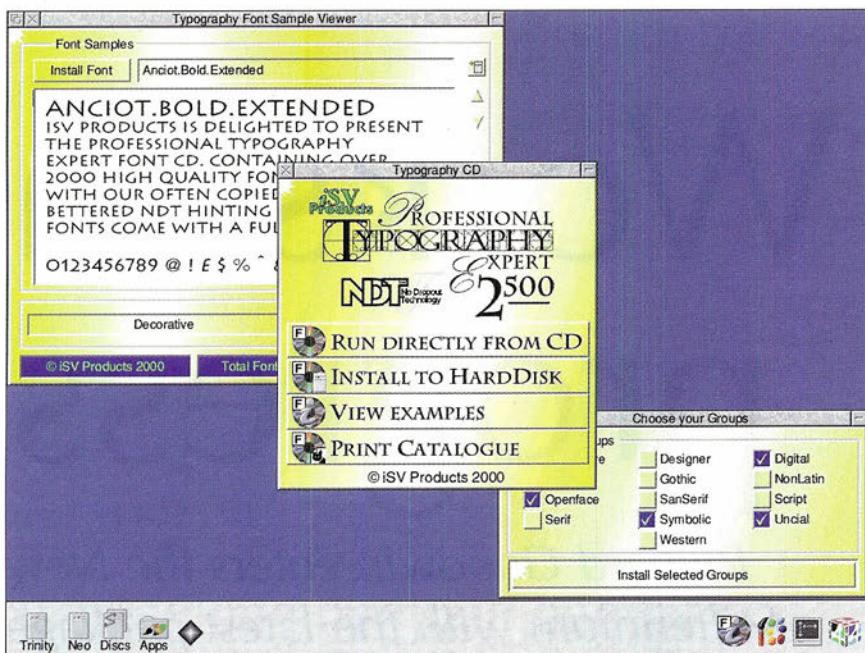
An example sheet of distortions, with the software switched to use a copper skin.

file and colour handling. You can now import many more file formats and save out as vector or anti-aliased bitmaps (Sprite, JPEG, GIF and TIFF without the need to fiddle around with screenshots), although I was disappointed that the *ArtWorks* importer resulted in a bitmap and requires 4-8MB of memory to process a file. Adding standards such as better EPS handling helps make *Draw* a more rounded package for anyone wanting to produce images for real world applications.

Similarly, the handling of colours, tints, effects and colour separations boost *Draw*'s performance in this

area past that of *ArtWorks*. There are also some cool effects such as changing lines into fat white lines edged in black so you can quickly knock up a road map, easy creation of drop shadows and so on.

Apparently one of the most requested additions was the 'Bolt-on' tool bar, which allows you to drag and drop applications into icons on the *DWNM* tool bar and fire them up as if they were part of the main program. Given that I've spent quite a bit of time in the past cataloguing and designing icons for *Voyager's Vix* programs (add-ons to the *ArgoNet* internet suite) I guess I should shy



Installing and previewing fonts using the (very yellow) software provided.

away from comments about it being a glorified extension of the desktop pinboard and concentrate on the fact that there's a bundle of useful tools supplied that you can use to augment DWNM – from *Draw* file extras like *SpiroDraw* and *DrawLots* to system extensions like *CTEnhance* (which gives vastly superior colour reproduction by changing the dithering patterns in screen modes with less than 16 million colours).

Fonts

The DWNM package is not all about adding to *Draw* however; the disc comes with a host of other goodies. The fonts selection – almost 2,500

typefaces in all – contains a solid collection of font families, which allows for more consistent design than, say, a collection such as Harry Decker's which concentrates more on having lots of outlandishly different fonts. Grouped together they can either be run from the CD, or installed singly using the preview tool. This excellent tool makes it quick to find the right font and use it, although the yellow and blue colour scheme which breaks both the standard RISC OS look and the copper 'skins' used elsewhere is a bit much.

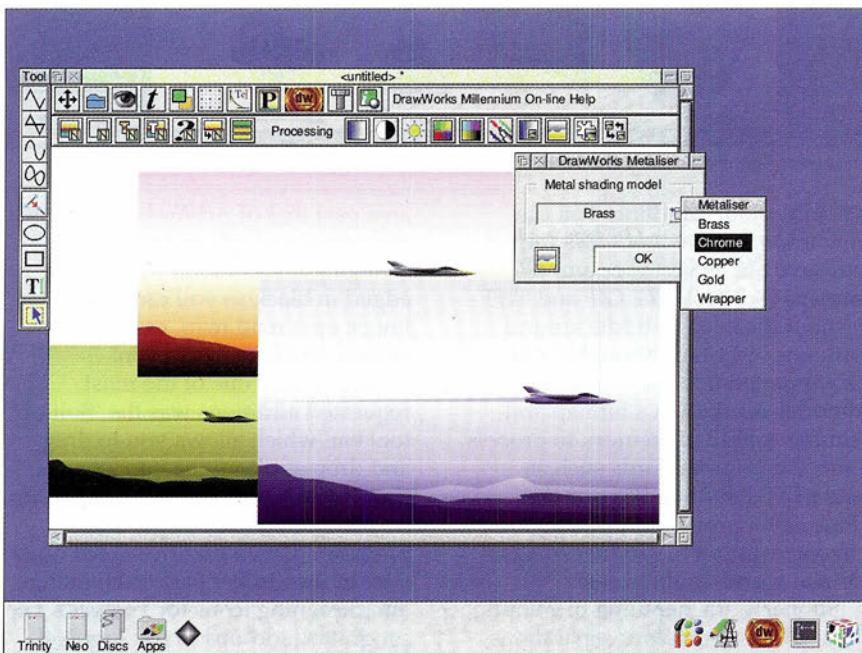
If 2,500 fonts aren't enough for you, there's also a collection of other utilities to alter or create fonts

yourself; these are accessible right out of the *DrawWorks* tool bar, so there's no excuse for moaning about not having the right font any more. *FontFiend* allows you not only to edit fonts in a similar manner to *FontEd* (which is also included) but also to do tricks like automatically create oblique versions, and even create font characters from *Draw* objects just by drawing a character in *Draw*, selecting it and 'saving' that selection straight to the position you want it in the font table – very handy. For more font effects there's *Font TrixPRO*, plus tools for kerning, changing names etc.

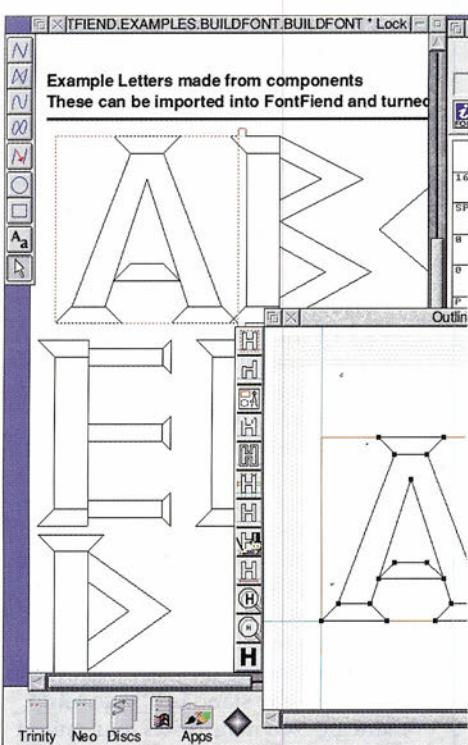
Clip-art

The clip-art supplied is a pretty nice collection of bitmaps and vector images, some 200K in all. The bitmap images are in JPEG format for scans of photographs or slides with a good selection of backdrops, images of foreign views and miscellaneous scenes, or sprites for the lower quality images such as the monochrome engravings or postcards that appear to have been taken from GIFs originally. The vector images, *Draw* format naturally, follow a similar pattern of providing a mixture of objects, scenes, cartoons and so on.

So that you can manage your clip-art – around 1,800 pieces in all – there's a program called *Mr. Clippy*. I've stumbled upon this chap before, and if you can get past the annoying



Using the 'metaliser' to tint this scene.



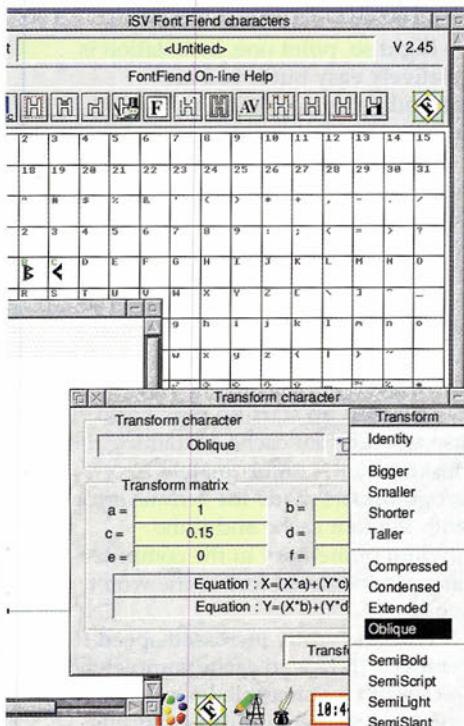
FontFiend in action, converting a character designed in *Draw*

singing banner at the start (which you can't quit) then it's actually a pretty handy tool for cataloguing your images, allowing you to break them down into sections and sub section. Using pre-converted 256 colour sprites it's pretty nippy once everything's been stored, and of course comes with the clip-art provided already catalogued.

Looking good?

One of the things that annoyed me with the original release was the garish user interface used in some of the programs in the suite; from *Mr. Clippy*'s cyan and yellow monstrosity to the gold effect and midnight blue used on the font explorer. With the current vogue for 'skinning' – being able to change the look of the user interface by changing the background and icon sprites – iSV has taken the opportunity to not only tone down some (but not all) of the worst excesses but also to allow you to change skin on *DWNM*. *Mr. Clippy* still sings on start up until you rip the banner loader out of the *!Run* file, but at least the choice is the new 'copper' look or the default RISC OS look and feel, not the previous technicolor yawn.

It's a pity that some of these new additions are hard-coded into the programs – for instance, in the main program you can only have the 'copper' (yellowy beige and orange) skin or the standard RISC OS one; there doesn't seem to be any



a font, and making it oblique.

provision in the program to scan for additional skins. The same also goes for things like the 'metaliser' – although it's fun to play with the provided tint schemes, it would have been nice to be able to create and save your own, even if it's by changing the values in a text file. Offering these little extras to download from a Web site keeps people coming back for more.

DrawWorks New Millennium costs £40 for a CD, or £20 for an upgrade from the older version; before you rush to upgrade however you should be aware that while the older version ran on all RISC OS 3.1+ machines, the newer version is RISC OS 3.6 or above to take advantage of some of the features (and extra memory) of newer machines. Hence, both versions will be kept on iSV's books so that you don't miss out.

Conclusion

On the down side, one of the major drawbacks to *DrawWorks* is not the program itself but rather the reliance on *Draw* itself; back when *Draw* was the only thing available I used it for many years fairly happily, but a few minutes with a more modern vector package such as *ArtWorks* or now *Vantage* shows just how awkward the *Draw* interface can be.

Although *DrawWorks* can take a little of the pain away from, say, having to hunt through a menu for the zoom controls, it can't help some of the fundamentals like the way *Draw* handles trying to select an object in the middle of a bunch of other objects. There's also the fact

that many of the 'tools' in the main program are merely duplications of the options on the standard *Draw* menu.

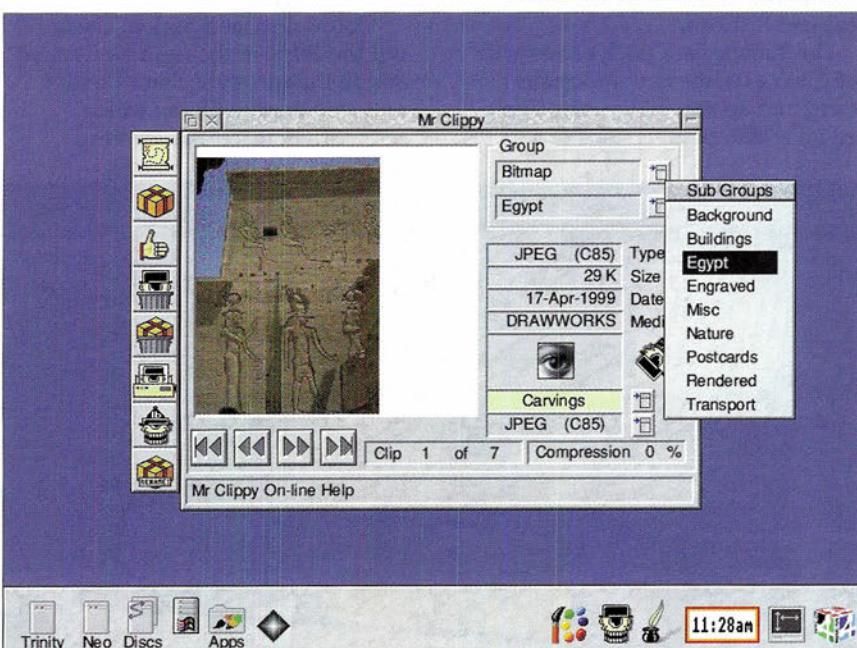
However, on the plus side there are some excellent features that do add to your array of tools; some time savers such as file import could probably be duplicated with a little time, effort and an arsenal of PD programs, while others like the advanced colour handling are either only available in much more costly programs, or completely unique.

Having a single, fairly cheap package that handles so many features represents good value for money. It's the extras however that make this CD; if the asking price were for the graphics enhancements alone then I'd say it's a toss up whether to go for this or save a little more and go for something more user-friendly, but if you factor in a large, well-managed fonts collection, a good selection of clip-art, plus tools such as the *FontFiend* font editor then it represents excellent value for money for schools, students and those who like to dabble in graphic design.

END

Product details

Product: *DrawWorks New Millennium*
 Price: £40 (plus P&P)
 Supplier: iSV Products
 86 Turnberry, Home Farm,
 Bracknell, Berks,
 RG12 8ZH
 Tel: (01344) 455769
 E-mail: atimbrell@aol.com
 Web: www.isvproducts.co.uk



He's Mr. Clippy; he stores clip-art and sings for you.

Moving in

There is an argument that says the editor of a computer magazine shouldn't have the most powerful computer available in the market – having a less powerful one reduces arrogance.

On the other hand, there comes a time when a bit of indulgence must be permitted – and I think working with an ARM600 Risc PC for the last seven years is a sufficiently humbling experience for anyone.

So, at the Wakefield Show, I took the plunge and acquired a Kinetic card for the office – I had already upgraded my personal Risc PC 600 to a StrongARM a few months ago and had enjoyed the benefits of that.

Installation

Putting my extremely heavy workload to one side – on the basis that the time I spent installing the new processor would ultimately be re-paid thoroughly by the amount of time saved using the faster processor – I unplugged my machine and stripped it down.

The Kinetic card pack comes with RISC OS 4.03, the new processor board and an anti-static strip. There are three different versions of 4.03,

Steve Turnbull takes a look at the pros and cons of the new processor card

one each for Castle, RiscStation and MicroDigital, basically they have identical functionality with the different hardware configurations.

The instructions say that you should install the new RISC OS chips first, to use with the existing processor to ensure that that's been done correctly, and then upgrade the processor.

Well, that didn't work. Having delicately removed the RISC OS 4 Flash ROMs (for return to Castle in part-ex) I put in the new chips – while memories of chip insertion and removal in the BBC Micro flew through my mind – put the machine together sufficiently to function and switched on.

I got a black and green slow flashing screen.

Oops. I rushed back to check I'd put the chips in the right way round and in the correct sockets. I had. I removed them with my trusty screwdriver (carefully levering

evenly from each end) checked the pins and re-inserted. Switch on: same problem.

I considered the options: I could give up and restore the system, then make some enquiries. Or I could assume the instructions were wrong. After all, I reasoned, the people who wrote the instructions had almost certainly upgraded StrongARM machines, not ARM600s. Also nothing was cooking, it just didn't work.

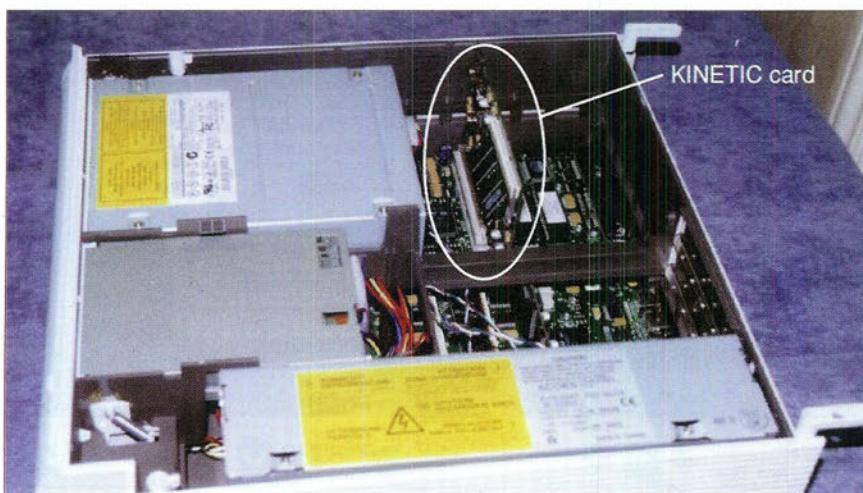
So I put in the Kinetic, switched on and bingo! it worked. Not only that but I was stunned by the start-up time of just a few seconds and rather pleased by the larger amount of memory announced. Yummy.

Right so, point one, installation is relatively easy but if you are upgrading an ARM600 the original instructions are wrong.

Now it had hung-up while booting so I went through the boot-up sequence removing everything and then putting programs back one at a time. It turned out I didn't have a StrongARM-compatible version of MacFS, but I haven't had to format a Mac disc in years – we share a network now. So it was no loss.

To speed up start-up time I also use a saved font cache containing the desktop font – unfortunately Acorn programmers made the serious error with the font cache and if the amount of memory in the computer changes the saved font cache won't work.

With the vastly increased speed I removed the saved cache completely – it wasn't a noticeable loss. Another point worth mentioning is that this particular machine does not have any peripherals or extra cards, it has



So, all we have to do is plug-in the new KINETIC card?

into action

a couple of IDE harddiscs and a network card. The importance of this will become clear when we get on to the downside.

Workload

The RISC OS side of the production for *Acorn User* consists of all the editing and sub-editing of the words in *Impression* – occasionally porting files from *Word* into *TechWriter* and then loading the text from there to *Impression*, or occasionally from *Ovation Pro*.

After editing and inserting the necessary styles the text is saved as text with styles and filtered through a non-multitasking program, written by ex-*Acorn User* editor Mark Moxon, which converts the styles to something *Quark XPress* on the Apple Mac will understand. The text for a one page article took a little over a second on the Risc PC 600.

The pictures arrive in various formats: Sprites, Drawfiles, Artworks, JPEG, PNG and numerous other "foreign" file types. Files which are vector graphics (drawfile and Artwork) are put through *Artworks* and output as Adobe *Illustrator* files – except when we get the dreaded "Out of memory" error – using a nifty two-line addition to the resultant files these will load into *Illustrator* versions beyond v5.

If the memory fault occurs we take a step back to another program commissioned by *Acorn User* (but available as PD) *Art2Spr* which renders Artwork or drawfiles to sprite (with various colour depth and scaling options) which can then be saved.

Sprites are converted to compressed TIFFs using a multi-



tasking custom application (*TIFFer*) written by Ben Summers which will batch-convert sprites simply by dragging a whole directory to its iconbar icon. Other formats are just passed across to the Mac untouched as *Photoshop* can handle them easily.

Converting a directory of screen-grabs could take anything up to half an hour, although a set of small ones would run in a few minutes.

Most of the adverts you see in *Acorn User* are also produced initially on RISC OS, these must be converted as-is for the Mac. The technique used in this case is to use the colour Postscript printer driver to produce a postscript file which is then passed over to the Mac and rendered as a bit-map at the appropriate resolution in *Photodesk*.

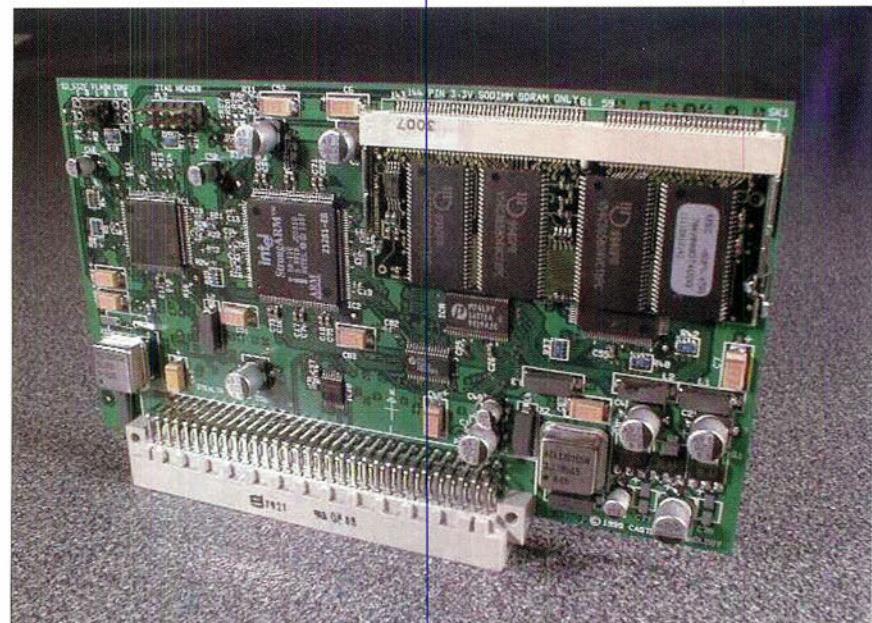
Some of the adverts can produce files in excess of 20Mb and both the creation process and the data transfer by network to the Mac, can take a considerable amount of time, up to fifteen minutes and five minutes respectively.

Apart from that there are the letters that need to be printed and various administrative documents including spreadsheets and databases. We don't do a great deal of image processing in RISC OS although considering how much difficulty an iMac has in throwing around the big files used for the cover and

Faster than...

So with that summary of the kind of jobs I use the machine for let's take a look at the kind of results achieved by putting in the new card. Now we're not looking at official timings here, there's really no point, everybody has different needs and what counts is how a system feels to the user.

I've already mentioned the start-up speed, technically speaking (in addition to booting up whatever applications you happen to have) the new system also copies all the ROM-based modules across into the RAM which runs faster anyway. It has



been argued that it's relatively simple to set up any machine to do this anyway, which may well be true, but the Kinetic also gains by not using the slower Risc PC bus.

So we have faster start-up, I also notice a dramatic increase in window response: the speed with which windows appear and are re-drawn, smoothness of the drag and so on. More than twice I've had a double-take on the speed, thinking "oh it didn't do it" when, in fact, it had happened so fast that I hadn't noticed.

It's a curious effect and I think it's because there's no "motion" on the screen: on slower machines (and that includes the 200MHz StrongARM Risc PC I have at home) when a window is removed there is a perceptible lag in the redraw. The combination of RAMmed modules, RISC OS 4 and the faster hardware design has taken the redraw speed beyond what I notice hence the changes appear instantaneous.

Taking the tasks I do as routine, the loading of applications is considerably faster: small applications just flick into existence on the iconbar with no flicker - a problem because I had learned to

take the flicker as a cue that the task had loaded, more double-takes. Launching large applications is faster by a factor of six to eight over the ARM600. It makes work less tedious and, as I dislike a cluttered iconbar, I feel less bothered about quitting applications that might take a while to reload if need them.

The redraw speed on *Impression*, *Artworks*, *Draw* and the like, is quite staggering - complex documents may still take a noticeable time for redraw but for the ones I deal with (such as adverts) it's now very much faster. Quite often I would ensure that only a tiny amount of the document was showing in the window to ensure redraw time was kept to a minimum, this is no longer necessary.

The double-take effect occurs once again when converting text files to Quark-understandable format, without even a flicker it's impossible to tell when it's done - I'll have to modify the program to alter its icon when its processing a file so there's a visual clue. Processing sprites into TIFFs multitasks and puts up a window showing its progress, this now flies through the files at an incredible rate - I haven't yet got

Refurbished RiscPCs from !!! £245.00 !!!

ARM610 9MB RAM 210MB HD R03.50
£245.00
ARM710 17MB RAM 540MB Hard Drive R03.60
£295.00
StrongARM 17MB RAM 2GB HD R03.70
£495.00



Upgrade options

RiscOS3.70 - £35.00
CDROM Drive - £35.00
StrongArm 233MHz £ R03.70 - £225.00
4GB Hard Drive (requires 3.70) - £75.00
AKF60 monitor - £40.00
RJ45 Network card - £75.00
All RiscPCs come with mouse, keyboard,
and three months warranty.

All prices plus VAT and carriage

AJS Computers Ltd
Unit 28 East Hanningfield Estate
East Hanningfield
Essex CM3 8AB
tel 01245 400066
fax 01245 400014
sales@ajscomputers.co.uk
www.ajscomputers.co.uk



Monitors

Iiyama 15" 350	£145.00
Iiyama 17" (S702GT) .28dot	£279.00
Iiyama 17" 400 Pro .25 dot	£359.00
CTX 14" Digital Scan	£125.00
CTX 15" Digital Scan	£145.00
CTX 17".28 70Khz Digital	£259.00
CTX mons have (3 year on-site warranty)	
Many other models available	

Switch Boxes

Parallel 2 way (25w 'D' skts)	£16.99
Parallel 4 way (25w 'D' skts)	£19.99
Serial 2 way (9w 'D' skts)	£19.99
Monitor+Keyboard 2 way	£19.99
Suitable cables and other boxes available, please ask	

VGA to PAL TV Converter

The VGA Converter allows the output of any Acorn running in a VGA or SVGA mode (or PC comp) to be displayed on a TV or recorded onto a video recorder. Please ask for more information.

Price £159.00 inc vat



Colour Printers

Epson Stylus Colour 440	£105.00
Epson Stylus Colour 640	£135.00
Epson Stylus Colour 850	£199.00
HP Laserjet 1100 (laser mono)	£289.00

Virus Protection

Pineapples Virus Protection Scheme has been running for over six years and is still being updated with new viruses on a regular basis. New software versions are sent out to members during the year, and the total number of viruses which can be removed is well over 200. The latest version is now scanning at up to four times faster than previous versions despite coping with many more viruses.

Joining fee just £28.20

If you're interested in virus protection, join the Pineapple Virus Protection scheme and buy Killer. Accept no alternative - 'Acorn User Feb 96' Inexpensive multi-user licences



Co-Comp

New Kinetic Risc PC from

£1173.82

StrongARM 233Mhz CPU (Rev T), RISC OS 4, 70Mb RAM, 10Gb H/Drive, 40x CD ROM - £1173.82*

Risc PC233'T' Web Wizard

StrongARM 233Mhz CPU (Rev T), RISC OS 4, 34Mb RAM, 8Gb H/Drive, 40x CD ROM, 56K Modem, Ant Internet Software - £1173.82*

A7000+ Odyssey SURF

ARM 7500FE CPU (50 Mips), RISC OS 4, 24Mb RAM, 4Gb H/Drive, DVD ROM (as CD only), 56K Modem - £821.33*

A7000+ Odyssey CD

ARM 7500FE CPU (50 Mips), RISC OS 4, 16Mb RAM, 4Gb H/Drive, 40x CD ROM - £645.08* Primary/Secondary Pack for above add £58.75

*Monitors from £116.32

System Delivery from £15

Website Design and Hosting

Prices incl. VAT. E&OE

Authorised
Installer



PO Box 199,

Preston,

PR1 9SS

Tel: 07970 064479

UK

Fax: 07971 434612

enquiry@co-comp.co.uk

http://www.co-comp.co.uk

RiscStation Lite R7500

ARM 7500 CPU 56 Mhz (50 Mips), RISC OS 4, 16Mb EDO RAM, 4/6Mb Flash Memory, 4.3Gb H/Drive, 48x CD ROM, 10baseT network, Game, Hi-Speed Parallel, 2x Hi-Speed Serial ports, Infra-Red, 16Bit 3D Sound, onboard Midi.

For new 'R7500 Lite+' (with 8.4Gb H/Drive & 64Mb RAM add £94.00 to:

Base only	- £586.33
With 14" Monitor	£680.33
15" Monitor	£703.83
17" Monitor	£762.58
19" Monitor	£880.08

neTWOX

ARM 7500 CPU 56 Mhz (50 Mips), RISC OS 4, 8Mb EDO RAM, 4/6Mb Flash Memory, 10baseT network, Game, Hi-Speed Parallel, 2x Hi-Speed Serial ports, Infra-Red, 16Bit 3D Sound, onboard Midi.

For new 'neTWOX HD' (with 2.1Gb H/Drive add £58.75 to:

Base only	- £468.83
With 14" Monitor	£562.83
15" Monitor	£586.33
17" Monitor	£645.08
19" Monitor	£762.58

RiscStation

— Registered Dealer —



Parallel to SCSI adapter

A brand new product from Pineapple providing an inexpensive alternative to a SCSI card when using SCSI scanners. The SCSI adapter plugs into the parallel port (with a 'through' printer connector), and can be used directly with SCSI scanners. Works with A3010/3020/4000/5000/A7000/Risc PC (inc StrongARM).

Price just £59.00 inc vat



Colour Scanners

The new Epson GT7000 is great value and the Photo version which includes a transparency adapter gives excellent quality on both transparencies and negatives. Our new SCSI parallel port adapter cable makes this excellent scanner very affordable. All scanner prices include Imagemaster and Twain software. The cable supplied with the scanner has a 15w 'D' connector.

Epson GT7000 - SCSI £259.00

Epson GT7000 Photo upgrade £90.47

Pineapple Software

Suite 1, 310 Green Lane, ILFORD
Essex IG1 1XT

Tel 0208 599 1476 Fax 0208 598 2343

email: sales@pineapple.demon.co.uk

www: http://www.pineapple.demon.co.uk

Terms:- All prices include

17.5% vat. Carriage £5 on most hardware. Small items £3 (or less). Phone for quote outside UK. Official orders, cheques and all major credit cards accepted at no extra charge.



Studio24Pro

Many Acorn User front covers have been created from scratch using this program alone, concrete proof of the power of this creative tool! - Acorn User Mar96

New low price - £59.00 inc vat

over the need to watch it happen. But even waiting and watching is worthwhile since it's fast enough that I don't really have time to make a cup of coffee.

But the really big test is the *Acorn User* adverts, some of these full page adverts are huge and create huge files. While normal documents now take less than three seconds to print, even one of these big files is down to under ten seconds to create a 20Mb postscript file, then throwing it over the network to the Mac – even that has been speeded up. Now if the 300MHz+ iMac was four times faster it could match the speed delivered by the Kinetic combination.

Does that seem crazy?

It isn't. In the PC world they talk a lot about specifications and clock speed, even the Mac people do that but the fact is that what counts is machine power delivered to the user. This is where RISC OS beats the competition hands down, clock-tick for clock-tick RISC OS simply delivers more power and hence appears to be a machine with a higher clock speed than it actually is – when compared to other machines.

Hence a 300MHz iMac appears slow and unwieldy, as "bad" as the original Risc PC 600 running at a sixth the clock speed. But the new set-up with the fast processor, RISC OS 4, RAMmed operating system – plus the new memory bypassing the bottleneck of the old Risc PC bus, gives a machine that in terms of delivered power gives a productivity

four times the iMac.

Plain sailing?

And that's the good news. But that is not, unfortunately, the whole picture. There are problems – you can't move the memory to a radically different location without breaking something.

While it is true that no typical application should have any problems – and I haven't found one that does – there are difficulties with some systems.

DMA (direct memory access) is a hardware system from transferring data from one place to another without involving the main processor. Hard disc systems such as SCSI use DMA when moving data to and from the hard disc.

But DMA does not work on the Kinetic because the memory isn't where it's supposed to be – this doesn't mean that all SCSI cards fail because most of them have fall-back options to use a different system if DMA is not available, however the fallback method is slower. There is an argument that says if you're using a Kinetic for very big image processing work and virtual memory is in use on SCSI discs, you could get a drop in efficiency.

We have not been able to test this yet but we'll bring you the information on it as soon as possible – of course, even if that's true, it's impossible to give a complete answer as to whether the Kinetic is a good thing or not, because much depends on what else you use the system for

– do the other tasks you will perform faster make up for the slower SCSI access? One area that's looking to be a serious problem is PC cards, these do not work under RISC OS 4.03, it came to light because a Risc PC is the only thing that can have a Kinetic and a PC card, although apparently there is



The slimline SDRAM card

also a similar problem with NetBSD. The question at this point is whether the problem occurs because there's a RISC OS 4.03 bug in the Castle version; or whether it's a general RISC OS 4.03 problem that's only come to light because the Risc PC can have PC cards plugged in.

Should you buy one?

In conclusion let's take a look at who should buy one of these, and who shouldn't. If you have a Risc PC with an ARM600/700, and you haven't upgraded to RISC OS 4, I would give you an unequivocal yes. Buy it, you get a powerful StrongARM, extra memory and RISC OS 4 in a convenient package that will completely amaze you.

If you are running StrongARM Risc PC with RISC OS 3.7, I would say probably yes. It's a reasonable deal, the machine will run noticeably faster and you get RISC OS 4. A rarer likelihood is that you're running RISC OS 4 on an ARM600/700 (as I was). Once again I would say, yes it's a reasonable deal which will run dramatically faster – you'll love it.

If you already have a fast StrongARM and RISC OS 4 then it's doubtful whether it's worth it. Save your money for a Viewfinder card which will be reviewed in the next issue.

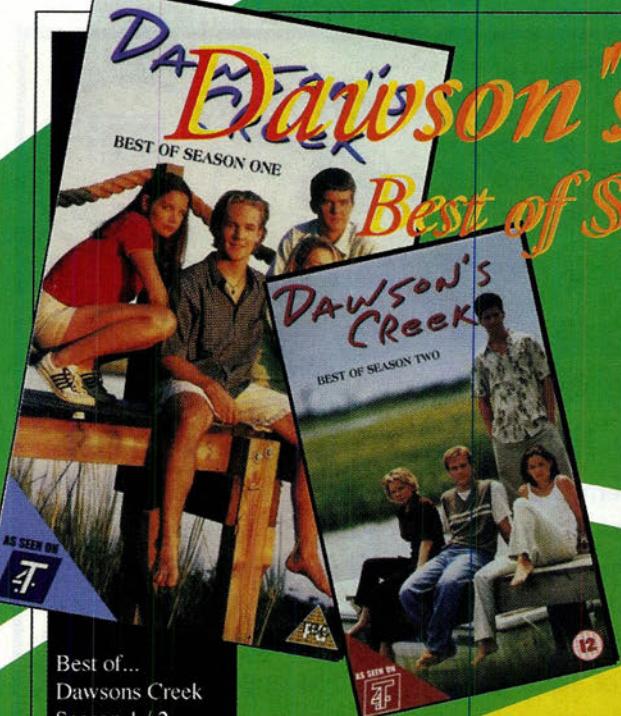
END

Product details

Product:	KINETIC Risc PC upgrade £399 plus VAT; basic KINETIC Risc PC £999 plus VAT
Supplier:	Castle Technology Ltd, Ore Trading Estate, Woodbridge Road, Framlingham, Suffolk IP13 9LL UK
Tel:	01728 723200
Fax:	0800 783 9638 (freefax)
E-mail:	acorn@castle.org.uk
Web:	www.castle.org.uk

Dawson's Creek

Best of Season 1 & 2



Best of...
Dawson's Creek
Season 1 / 2

Out Now

Price £10.99 each

Format VHS only

Rating
Season 1 ●●●●○
Season 2 ●●●●○

Dawson's Creek, a seemingly autobiographical account of creator Kevin Williamson's youth, tells the tale of four teenagers in a waterside hamlet, and their growing troubles along the way.

Over the past three years, it has grown to become one of the most successful shows in America, and it doesn't do too badly in the UK either.

Quite what makes it so popular is difficult to guess: it's probably because most of us can recognise some similarities with what goes on. It's gritty; it's almost real – and this has finally been recognised by Columbia Tristar with the release of two videos!

Best of Season 1

There has, to date, been only one episode of Dawson's Creek not to be screened during the 'evening peak' – this, *The Scare*, is featured on this tape.

Taking strong influences from *Scream* and *I Know What You Did Last Summer*, Jen has a prank caller (a la *Scream*), Joey plays dead, Pacey brings back a psycho girlfriend and

Dawson remains as oblivious as ever to Joey's feelings... what can we say? As it was written by the *Scream* king himself, Williamson has done a good job of taking elements of horror movies and putting them into place within a different vehicle.

Also featured, *The Beauty Contest* has Joey entering for the chance of a \$5,000 prize – ideal for a college fund – but she ends up winning the affections of Dawson. This one also has its moments, with Pacey also entering the contest – makes for a few funnies along the way.

Best of Season 2

At the end of Season 1, where Dawson finally got a clue, *The Kiss* finally happened: Dawson and Joey got it together.

What follows is the typical did they do this, did they do that from their friends, and what should they do between themselves?

His Leading Lady tells how Dawson is trying to locate an actress to play the part of Joey – from whom he has now broken up – in his autobiographical movie... here we find out, for the first time, that Joey really misses Dawson – and eventually she will get him back.

Between these two tapes, you've got a good cross-section of what life in Dawson's Creek is like. It's gritty, it's moving and sometimes it made me want to cry.

What can we say, other than if you're a Dawson's Creek fan, get them both. If you're not a fan, or have yet to find out more, try watching Dawson's Creek on Tuesdays at 6pm on Channel 4, repeated Sundays at 12.40pm.

Dave Bradforth



RiscAction
Magazine

Out Now

Price

£2.00

Format

Without Disc

RiscAction is the latest entry into the RISC OS marketplace. Featuring articles written by users, for users it's begun with a reasonable reception; and we're looking towards taking this further!

At the Wakefield 2000 show we're pleased to be able to offer a sample edition of RiscAction, without the associated discs, for £1. The price of issue two, with three discs and the *Typography* CD-ROM is £4.

The cover feature of this issue takes a look at options for hard disc backup, and safe restoration of stored data.

We also delve into the realms of design mania, to demonstrate just how bad a design can really be... Sorry we meant good, obviously!

Another new magazine, *RISC World*, goes under the spotlight as we look back at where APDL (the publishers) came from, and where they hope RISC World will go.

Other than that, we hope to see you at Wakefield, and are looking optimistically to the future.

After all, if we can't look into the future what could we possibly have left?

Amy Smith
Editor, RiscAction

BACK ISSUE
MAGAZINE

Copies of *RISC User* (most of volume 12), *Archimedes World* (last issue) and *Acorn User* (issue 200) are still available – at just £1 plus 20p postage each. To order, send a cheque/postal order for the total amount (made payable to David Bradforth) to:

Magazine World, 40 Honiton Road, Romford, Essex RM7 9AJ

Strictly subject to availability – if we have run out, you will be refunded for the issues requested we no longer have.

Rcomp

Pushing forward the frontiers in RISC OS
internet & web authoring software

easy CLIP²

The Graphical Resource Management System

All new version with lots of
new features. RISC OS 4 OK!

£25

Upg £7

PostCode/Address finder
that no business should
be without!



AddressIt™

£99

Upg £50



Messenger

An E-mail and News
Client for RISC OS
Professional Edition

£30

SiteSeer £25

Web grabbing software for offline viewing

HTMLEdit Studio £105

Next generation WWW
authoring for RISC OS

All the tools you need

The Studio edition provides

HTMLEdit 4+	Java support, sound and music, link and image checking, syntax colouring and OLE	£53
Enhanced Web Toolkit	Visual frames, tables, animations, maps, palette control, Draw file conversion	£30
WebSpell	Full HTML-aware spelling checker	£15
Webster XL	Browser with frames, tables, forms, sound and JavaScript	£25

Now with SSL!

SiteMaster

The Web Site Management
System for RISC OS Computers

Now with automatic up-loader for
getting changes online fast

Price now

£25

Rcomp

Interactive



anthem* £70

inc. VAT

The RISC OS MIDI Sequencer

Anthem is a feature packed, easy to use MIDI sequencing package for RISC OS computers. It employs a powerful and acclaimed new object-oriented (phrases of music) song structure that allows the musician flexibility in arrangement, and ease of editing unparalleled by any other RISC OS sequencer.

*We believe our prices
are simply unbeatable*

Existing Sound & Music Products include
PC SoundPro 2 £35, MIDI Synthesizers,
Sound Cards, MIDI Cards, Parallel/Serial
Port MIDI, MIDI Support....

New!

THE CHAOS ENGINE £20

Also: Final Doom Levels Pack £15 inc.
Requires Doom or Doom+

Other Games Titles

Heretic & Hexen	£32.50
Heroes of Might & Magic 2	£35.00
Descent	£30.00
Doom+	£32.50
Syndicate+	£29.00
Abuse	£25.00

Quake

£23.00

Distributors for ARTEX: Ankh, Exodus
PRO ACTION: Various titles

22 Robert Moffat, High Legh, Knutsford, Cheshire WA16 6PS

Tel: 01925 755043 Fax: 01925 757377 <http://www.rcomp.co.uk/> Email: rcomp@rcomp.co.uk rci@rcomp.co.uk

Maximum overload

Way, way, way back in time was a computer called the ZX Spectrum. It was small, had a terrible

implementation of BASIC, but was extremely cheap and had a massive games base. Now on that machine, there was a classic called *Jetman* (from ACG). It was a lovely sideways scroller in which you had to collect the parts of your spaceship, fuel and wot-not in order to proceed to the next level. Cheap, cheerful, playable and fun, but as with all the Spectrum games, very limited.

The idea is ultra-simple: Collect the Fuzzies (alien life forms) and kill the other aliens without being killed yourself. Each "level" consists of four or five stages (collect the Fuzzies, kill the aliens, collect power points and navigate through an asteroid belt with a bonus level sometimes thrown in). Easy peasy.

Well, that's the review done. Not quite.

What is especially good about this game is the diversity in play. While on the outside, the game is just a left-right scroller, the tactics required to complete each level are very different. It is not enough to just go around blasting the living heck out of the aliens for a start, you can't. You have limited

ammunition and energy for your jetpac (a lovely touch being that as your pack's energy level drops, so does your speed and ability to jump to shoot), some of the enemies cannot be killed by just blasting them head on and worse still, some of the blighters tend to kill.

The programming team have gone above and beyond the call of duty with this one, the music is first class, the sound effects are brutal, the game is colourful, there is plenty to keep your imagination (and fingers) busy for hours with the very colourful graphics and super-fast (fifty frames per second) animation.

My only cause of criticism is not in the game, more the fact that the software cannot be directly played from the hard drive without having the original disc being in the floppy drive. While this is fine if the floppy drive is working and the disc itself is intact, it is a pain if one of the two decide to fail. If software is to be protected, I would much rather use the method employed by Clares (credits and manual-based codes) over the key disc.



OVERLOAD

Remembering back again to the original 4th Dimension software which used this system, when we moved to the StrongARM, most of the cause why software did not run was down to the key disc system. With the possibility now of having a true 32-bit operating system, will we be in the same position as before with the key disc systems?

That all said, Paradise have done a marvellous job with this and, until I saw the very modest price, I thought I was playing one of the £25-jobs only normally seen from RCI or, in days of old, Krisalis – but this is retailing at just £13 – great value for money.

Even on my A3000 machine, the speed of play was no different to that of my SA Risc PC and RiscStation machines (plus it has kept my seven year old daughter occupied over the rainy bank holiday weekend – justification for the price in itself) and as for addictiveness – like *Elite* and so many before it, this game is hard to put down. Go out and buy it now!

My hope here is that Paradise continue to produce games of this calibre in the future and bigger hope, that I am asked to review them.

Richard Jane

Product details

Product: Overload
Price: £12.99
Ages: 5-7
Supplier: Paradise Group, 38 Marlborough Drive, Sydenham, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, CV31 1GD

Science of

MIDI is an acronym for Musical Instrument Digital Interface. Basically, it is a standard way of connecting electronic instruments and computers together. Such instruments are usually piano-type keyboards or sound modules but can also include, for example, lighting units which flash in time to the music you are playing. During this article, references to keyboards are to those with piano-style keys and not to computer keyboards.

A sound module is essentially a large quantity of very high quality sound samples stored on a chip which are played by sending MIDI messages (for example, note pitch and duration) from a computer or keyboard and out to a speaker system. These sounds can also be modified in real-time with effects such as pitch-bending and modulation (vibrato), and can also be processed to make them sound 'fuller' or have reverb and so forth.

Most keyboards in a MIDI setup are usually 'home' keyboards/digital pianos or master controllers. The typical home keyboard has 49 or 61 keys with a built-in sound module and speakers. Master controllers are just a set of keys with no sounds – they are used for controlling a computer or (several) external sound modules.

Adding MIDI capabilities to



Figure 1: Example MIDI Map output

Alan Gibson makes even more music

previous Acorn hardware has been expensive because of the custom interfaces required. Whether it be an internal expansion card or a parallel port interface you still have to pay close to £100 just for the interface. On top of that you require a couple of MIDI cables plus whichever combination of keyboards and sound modules you need.

With the arrival of the RiscStation machines this has all changed as they have MIDI hardware supplied with every machine as standard. As with every PC you can buy, they have a games port on the back which looks like a shortened printer port. This is a combined MIDI/joystick interface and simply requires a MIDI 'breakout' cable and driver software to work. Also, inside every RiscStation is a 'writable' connector which allows you to add an internal sound module very simply. This review will look at the three 'Accent' packs which RiscStation produces which cover each of these options.

Pack 1 provides the software drivers and breakout cable, which you would use if you simply want to connect your existing keyboard or module to your machine. The software is supplied on a floppy disc as an update to the *Boot* structure – you simply drag the update over the *Boot* on your hard disc and the driver will then be run every time you switch on.

The breakout cable consists of a plug which goes into the games port connector and provides two standard MIDI cables (one IN and one OUT) which are about 2m in length. These plug straight into your keyboard or sound module so no extra MIDI cables are required.

The driver is written by ESP, who have a long history of producing MIDI products for RISC OS machines and contains a full MIDI

Support driver. MIDI Support is a more efficient and configurable driver than Acorn's original code but remains backwards-compatible with it. MIDI Support allows you to have multiple interfaces in your machine and you can link any input to any output by issuing software commands. So if you have a sound module which has two INs, you can add, say, a parallel port interface in addition to this pack to give you two outputs. A MIDI Support device can either be a hardware interface or a piece of software.

Figure 1 shows part of the mapping display on my RiscStation which is running the powerful *MelIDI* sequencer with the ESP driver. *MelIDI* knows about MIDI Support devices and thus takes full advantage of them. The map shows each source of MIDI data available with their destinations immediately underneath. MIDI Port0 is the backwards-compatible 'Acorn port' which is used by older software such as *Sibelius* (which will not be listed). Here, this is connected to the RiscStation driver (RSD), meaning that anything which comes into the computer's MIDI IN socket will be handled by the RSD.

Further down, the RSD is connected to three destinations (one in, three out!). It is connected to the standard OUT and is also connected to itself. This means that any MIDI data received by the RSD is immediately sent back out again, giving you a MIDI THRU in software (this allows you to hear what you're playing if recording in Flexitime with *Sibelius*). Finally, it is also connected to *MelIDI* so you can play in notes into the sequencer.

At the bottom of the list, *MelIDI_A* (MIDI channels 1-16) is connected to both the RSD and to a VU-meter application. As you can

Sound

see, MIDI Support is very flexible – if you do have a parallel port interface for example, it will appear on the list as well and you would simply 'connect' MelIDI_B (channels 17-32) to ParallelMIDI, giving you a 32-channel output from your RiscStation.

Pack 2 adds an internal sound module to what you get in pack 1. A few years ago Audio Dynamics brought out a card called the PowerWave (which ESP later took over as the DMI50 series). This has an XG sound card upgrade available (a Yamaha DB50XG) which is a sound module on a small daughter board and plugs onto the wavetable connector on this card. As mentioned previously, the RiscStation motherboard has a wavetable connector as standard and Pack 2 contains the latest version of the daughterboard, the DB51XG.

This has the same specifications as the DB50XG but is only 9cm square. Simply by plugging the card in, the RiscStation gets an exceptional internal sound module which plays through the internal sound system (you listen through the speakers plugged into the headphone socket). If you have any MIDI-equipped games (like *Doom*) they can use the card as well.

Figure II gives brief specifications of the card. The samples are created with Yamaha's AWM2 technology. All this really means is that the sounds are of a very professional quality (and indeed are used by

professionals) and when used correctly can often be indistinguishable from real instruments.

General MIDI (GM) is a standard which gives 128 sounds/programs (for example: piano, flute, bari sax etc.) specific program numbers which are adhered to by every equipment manufacturer, which means that a MIDI file will sound very similar no matter which machine it is played on. Yamaha extended this standard and called it XG, which allocates many similar sounds to the same program number but with different bank numbers, thus allowing many hundreds of sounds to be provided while still maintaining GM compatibility.

In XG mode, you have access to 480 sounds (everything from orchestral instruments to bizarre sound effects) plus 11 drum kits and you can play up to 16 different sounds at the same time (that's 16 MIDI channels) with up to 32 notes at once although some complex sounds can use two notes at a time, reducing this total. Chorus, reverb and variations allow you to alter the quality of the sounds, sometimes quite dramatically. Each sound can respond differently to these effects but you can make sounds fatter, thinner, breathier and so forth, this is down to software control and so your software must be able to send the commands to do this.

External versions of the DB51XG also exist in the guise of the MU15 and its predecessor the MU10. To add an MU15, MIDI interface and cables and so on. to a Risc PC would cost just over £300. Doing a similar internal installation (a DMI50XG card which is based on a dual MIDI card) is over £250, so having the ability to add the same functionality to the RiscStation for less than half that is excellent value and it doesn't take up an expansion slot!

Pack 3 includes all the above and

DB51XG specifications.
Wavetable tone generation (Yamaha's Advanced Wave Memory 2).
676 voices in total (480 in XG, 579 in GS).
21 drum kits (11 in XG, 10 in GS).
16 parts, with maximum of 32 notes polyphony.
11 types of reverb, 11 types of chorus plus 42 variations.

Figure II: DB51XG specifications

adds a controller keyboard in the form of the Evolution MK149. This has 49 touch sensitive keys (4 octaves) which are the typical springy keys of home keyboards. It doesn't have any inbuilt sounds – the idea is that you play the sounds of the internal card after all! It also has pitch bend and modulation wheels, a volume slider with a LED display which allows you to send program change numbers, MIDI channel numbers and so forth.

Packs 2 and 3 also come with a CD which contains demonstration versions of the current MIDI software available for RISC OS machines and includes a selection of professional MIDI files which really show off the card, plus an HTML manual covering all of the sounds and effects available.

Also included on the CD is *Karelia 2*, which is an XG player and editor, allowing you to alter any aspect of your MIDI files. This is a development of the original software supplied by Q-Tec. The combination of free software and demos allows you to play with the different aspects of the card as well as evaluating the latest software.

In conclusion, if you are at all interested in music on a RiscStation these packs represent excellent value for money. Even if you already have a keyboard with a GM sound set, the extra sounds and quality offered by the XG card can make your pieces sound completely fresh.

END

MIDI Instruments				
Track name	Chan	Bank name	Bank	Patch
1 Bass lead	1:1	Bass	F	SlapBass2
2 Bass harmony	1:1	Bass	F	SlapBass2
3 GrandPiano	1:2	Piano	B	GrandPiano
4 Finger Bass	1:3	Bass	F	FingerBass2
5 Tenor Sax	1:4	Reed	J	TenorSax
6 Baritone Sax	1:5	Reed	J	BaritoneSax
7 BriteTrumpet	1:6	Brass	I	BriteTrumpet
8 Trombone	1:7	Brass	I	Trombone
9 Standard kit	1:10	Drum Kits	R	Standard kit
AcousticBass	JazzRhythm	VXLBright		
FingerDark	FlangeBass	Bas&DxEG		
FingerBass2	ModAmp	PickBass		
Fretless	Fretless2	Fretless3		
Synf reless	Smooth	SlapBass		
PunchyThump	SlapBass2	VelvetBass		
SynthBassDark	ReverbBass	AmpliBass		
TeknoBass	Oscar	Sorbus		
Hammer	SynBass2	MelloSynBass		
ChSynBass	SynBass2Dark	SmoothBass2		
DX Bass	XWreBass	ModularBass		

Figure III: Pick a bass. Any bass...

Product details

Product: Pack 1 £15, Pack 2 £99, Pack 3 £199 (exc VAT & carriage)
Supplier: RiscStation, 168 Elliott Street, Tyldesley, Manchester M29 8DS, UK
Tel: (+44/0) 1942 797777
Fax: (+44/0) 1942 797711
Web: www.riscstation.co.uk
E-mail: info@riscstation.co.uk

Free Ads

• Has anyone got an Irlam Instruments i16 sound sampler card they no longer need. Tel 01623 794385 or ashbury@ukgateway.net (will reply but spasmadic)

• A4000, 4MB, 80MB Hard drive, KEyboard, AKF18 Colour Monitor - £150; A3010 Keyboard 1MB - £20 Tel: 01933 626326 (Northants) after 6pm. Buyer collects

• For Sale: Sibelius 7 software (incl. manual, packaging etc..), also 100 Monotype Fonts. Offers?? Owen Leech, Bristol 0117 9239447, owenleech@hotmail.com

• FREE! 20 brand-new Imation high-density 5.25" disks. (For IBM computers only - NOT suitable for BBC micro). Just pay carriage (£1.50). Tel: Chris on 01570-

470035.

• RiscPC 600 - 8MB +1MB RAM, 400MB IDE HD, ARM 610 Processor Card, PC Card, CD ROM, Acorn AFK60 Monitor. All for £270 or offers. Call Jim on (01572) 737 699 (Evenings) (Rutland, East Midlands).

• RPC700 13MB HD830 £200. A7000 8MB HD540 Fan £150. A5000 4MB HD170 £80. A4000 2MB HD80 £50. Taxan 770 £20. Also A540, A440/1/Arm3, A3000 plus accessories/software. Call/email for details mike@mhabbs.demon.co.uk 07710-348205 (Cambridge).

• RiscPC 700 with SA, 17Mb RAM, 1Mb VRAM, 1.2Gb Hard Drive, CD-ROM, Internal modem, Freeserve internet package, Midi card, Dumb keyboard, hand-held scanner and computer trolley.

£650 ono. (Norwich) Fiona King, tel: 01953 605834 or e-mail: feeee@hohs.freeserve.co.uk

• Wanted : A RiscPC ethernet card - any type considered!

• Risc PC 600: 8MB +1MB RAM, 400MB IDE HD, ARM 610 Processor Card, PC Card, CD ROM, Acorn AFK60 Monitor. All for £270 or offers. Call Jim on (01572) 737 699 (Evenings) (Rutland, East Midlands).

• RPC700 13MB HD830 £200. A7000 8MB HD540 Fan £150. A5000 4MB HD170 £80. A4000 2MB HD80 £50. Taxan 770 £20. Also A540, A440/1/Arm3, A3000 plus accessories/software. Call/email for details mike@mhabbs.demon.co.uk 07710-348205 (Cambridge).

Why not take advantage of our free reader ad service? Fill in your details on this coupon (25 words maximum, one word per box below) and send it to Free Ads, Acorn User, Tau Press Ltd, 26 Stockport Village, Hooper St, Stockport SK1 1DQ or by e-mail to: freeads@acornuser.com. Only one ad per reader please. Although we

try to publish every ad we receive, we can make no guarantees; publication is entirely dependent on space and time constraints. Please include your name and phone number - these will not be published, but help us to contact you if needed. Please include your town/county in each ad to help other readers with their purchasing decision.



Supporting RISC OS users in South East England

Saturday 1st July 2000
Alban Arena, Civic Centre,
St. Albans, Herts

Doors open from 10am until 4.30pm

Adults £3.00

ARM Club or Foundation £2.00

Children under 16 FREE (accompanied by an adult)
(Pay on door)

- NEW products!
- Theatre programme
- Special show discounts
- Software to be won!
- Hobbyist/Games area

FREE bus shuttle from St. Albans train stations

Phone: (01935) 413170 Fax: (01935) 413170

Email: acornshow@argonet.co.uk

<http://www.argonet.co.uk/acornshow>

**Don't risk missing
your copy of
ACORN USER**

*Hand this form to your local newsagent TODAY
and he'll make sure you never miss out!*

Please reserve a copy of *Acorn User* magazine
every four weeks until further notice.

I will collect

I would like it delivered to my home

Name

Address

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

A message to the newsagent: *Acorn User* should be available

from your local wholesaler. If not, contact the

Retail Sales Manager on 0161 429 8902

What controls energy
but has no wavelength,
uses matter
yet has no mass,
is found in space
but has no location?

come and find out at the
what is
Scientology®
exhibition

- LONDON 2 – 6 Jul, Selfridge Hotel • MANCHESTER 14 – 20 Jul, Thistle Piccadilly • BIRMINGHAM 1 – 4 Aug, Burlington Hotel (New Street)
- EDINBURGH 9 – 15 Aug, Crown Plaza (Royal Mile) • BRIGHTON 18 – 24 Aug, Thistle Hotel (Kings Road) • PLYMOUTH 29 Aug – 3 Sep
- NEWCASTLE 7 – 9 Sep, Post House Forte Hotel (New Bridge Street) **Call 01342 318229 for further information**

©2000 COSRECI. Scientology is a registered trademark owned by Religious Technology Center and used with its permission. Services relating to Scientology Religious Philosophy are delivered throughout the world exclusively by licensees of the Church of Scientology with the permission of Religious Technology Center, holder of the Scientology and Dianetics trademarks.

China CD-Roms

Double CD action for charity

**Massive Web & FTP
sites on CD for you:**

- **Hensa**
- **CyberVillage**
- **Argonet**
- **The ARM Club**
- **Demon**
- **Stuttgart**
- **Acorn**
- **AcornUsers.org**
- **Barnet FTP**
- **Ancient Greeks**
- **And a whole
lot more**

Price:
£12.50*
*minimum donation



Supplier: By cheque or PO (payable to
RISC OS Charity Projects), direct to
Paul F. Johnson, 77 Station Road,
Haydock, St Helens WA11 0JL.

By credit/debit card from:

CTA (01942 797777)

CJE (01903 523222)

APDL (0181 778 2659)

Archive (01603 441777)

Riscstation Australia (+61 3 9458 3599)

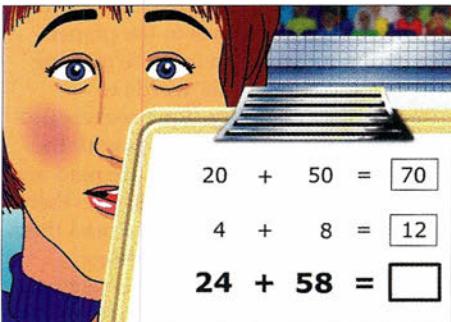
On behalf of Mencap

On your marks...

Mental Maths Olympics Year 4 and 5 are two more new titles coming from the Sherston stable this month. Designed by Simon Hosler and Lis Johnson the aim is to sharpen blunt mental maths skills.

The Mental Maths Olympics CDs each contain seven fun Olympic-style events that children can compete in; the quicker they answer the mental maths questions, the better they do! Teachers can choose which type of mental maths calculations to use and each event has its own personal coach who presents animated explanations of the most appropriate strategies for each type of calculation.

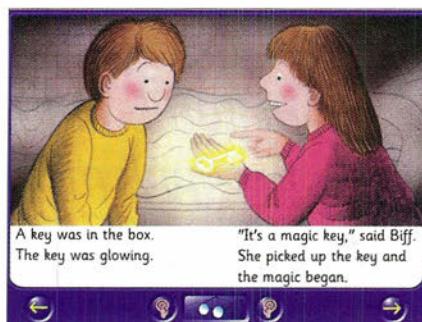
Both Mental Maths Olympics CDs have been designed to teach and practise the specific mental calculation strategies outlined in the National Numeracy Strategy Framework. The animated explanations of the strategies show exactly how they work and the sums presented to the children are carefully selected and graded to make sure they actually apply the appropriate strategy. A record-keeping section tracks all children's results, including last scores and best scores to motivate youngsters to



Anglia update

More updates for Anglia Campus. Of particular interest, is *The Seed*. A seed grows up to become a tall tree, but who's that old lady, reading in its shade? You'll find out in the latest Big Book to arrive in Primary English at www.angliacampus.com/login/pri/english/seed/index.htm

Staying with English, things are getting damp and scary, but you can enjoy the rhythm of *The Storm*, a new poem for Key Stage 1 to be found at: www.angliacampus.com/login/pri/english/?storm



improve their performance over time.

Each CD-ROM costs £49.95 and comes with classroom printed materials with photocopyable medal certificates and personal score booklets to encourage children to improve their 'mental maths' performance.

Also from Sherston are more talking stories to their collaboration with Oxford University Press. *Oxford Reading Tree Talking Stories, Stage 5* builds on the previous editions and is specifically designed for classroom use with simple interfaces, clear speech, highlighting text, amusing animations and comprehensive teacher controls.

In addition, each of the six trunk books included on the Stage 5 Talking Stories CD-ROM is accompanied by interactive Word, Sentence and Text level activities. The activities, which have been carefully designed with the National Literacy Strategy in mind, directly relate to each book's storyline and content. The cost is £40.

For more information contact Sherston on 01666 843200 or visit their Web site at www.sherston.com

In brief

Web updates

More information this month on the SCARAN (Scottish Cultural Resources Access Network) Web project. This is a subscription Web site providing resources and access to information of Scottish origin and which links to Arts, Geography and History curriculum for the Scottish and National Curricula.

The first new addition is a project comprises 200 full data sets on reconstructions of prehistoric, Roman and Celtic structures, life and crafts, based on the on-going development programme at Archaeolink Prehistory Park in Aberdeenshire.

You can access this via www.scaran.ac.uk or you could link to RE:SOURCE. This is a new cultural organisation which replaces the Museums & Galleries Commission (MGC) and Libraries & Information Commission (LIC). However, to ensure that MGC & LIC information remains readily available both Web sites will remain operational, though they will no longer be updated.

Get your address

So you've finished tweaking the school's HTML and now want the world to admire your efforts, but what address should you give the creation?

All schools now have a domain name registered for them as part of the School Names on the Net project. You can find your address by contacting Nominet - free!

The domain names follow a standard format - the school's name following by the location with the suffix sch.uk. You could take an educated guess to find a particular school or ring Nominet on 01865 332289.

Contacting AU

Pam Turnbull:
educ@acornuser.com

Taking weather from literacy to geography and Key Stage 3 and 4 is *Geography in the News 10*. Here you'll discover information on the floods that have devastated Mozambique, a country that had only recently begun to emerge from a long period of economic instability and civil war.

These pages will help students discover the causes and the consequences of the Mozambique floods at: www.angliacampus.com/login/sec/geog/?gn010

Sounds great

The final two releases in this phase of the Oxford Literacy Web collaboration between Sherston and Oxford University Press, are Sound Activities and the Big A B C. Both follow the same style of graphics, interface and support features in Sound Stories - reviewed in the June issue of *Acorn User*. Aimed at Key Stage 1 literacy lessons, all three products are based on the *Letters, Sounds and Rhymes* strand of the *Oxford Literacy Web*.

Using the Sassoon font and a range of voices - from the cartoon guide Webster, the spider, giving instructions and advice, to the female voice sounding out the correct phonemes for letters and digraphs - Sound Activities divides into two sections.

There are four activities in total which may seem a little on the light side considering the cost. However, I was impressed by the detail in the design and the built-in - and pretty much transparent - support for children who are struggling.

The main menu screen offers children *The Balloon Game* and *The Posting Games*. Both of these are listening games, while *The Rocket* and *The T-shirt Games* stresses spelling patterns.

If you don't want all the games on offer, you need to access the Teacher's Options screen by clicking on the T button. This allows you to customise the activities for an individual child. So much so that

Pam Turnbull looks at pattern activities to supplement your Literacy Hour

you can opt to use all the alphabet and digraphs, just the main alphabet or the teacher can specify certain letters/digraphs children are struggling with. Teachers can also decide whether you want coloured onsets. Progress can be tracked, however, you will have to have installed the program on the hard disc to use this feature. If you don't need this facility you can run the program from the CD-ROM.

Starting with the listening games, *The Balloon Game* provides children with a chance to practice recognising initial phonemes (or end phonemes when it comes to x) using a range of pictures. There are five images held within five balloons, three will match the target sound and all pupils have to do is click on the correct balloons. Once finished the wrong balloons will pop and the correct ones reappear with the initial letter or digraph trailing underneath attached to the string. Children play the game six times - although clicking on the M at any time will return them to the main menu. All finished and children are offered the chance to play again.

For a more challenging game you need to turn to *The Posting Game*.

Here you are presented with three doors each showing a letter or digraph in the window. You also get a letter featuring a picture rather than an address. Children have to match picture and letter - six in all. Then the doors open to show the pictures you posted while the spider reinforces the lesson by highlighting and naming each one.

Moving on the spelling games, the first is *The Rocket*

Available letters

- Whole alphabets with digraphs
- Whole alphabet without digraphs
- Teacher's selection

Volume control

off low medium full

Music

- appear in lower case only
- appear in upper and lower case
- sound only narrated
- sound and name narrated

Reference letters

Activities

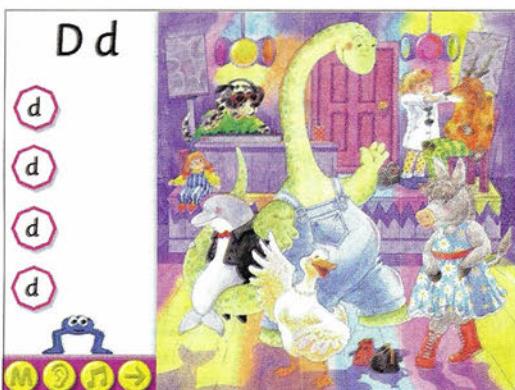
- Listening activities
- Spelling pattern activities
- Coloured onsets
- Auto help

Teacher Options

Game. Three rockets are poised for take-off and each sporting a letter. On their destination planet appears a picture and word which is missing its initial letter. The task is quite straightforward and if you click the correct rocket it flies to the planet dropping its cargo into the missing space. There are six words to complete and once done rockets pull across the skies the words with the same initial letter. These are read and highlighted by the spider, who then encourages the children to read them while he does the highlighting.

The second game in this section is *The T-Shirt Game*. Similar to the first, here a T-shirt has been designed with a picture in its centre, underneath is the name from which the initial letter has been torn off and children must discover which of the three possibilities is correct. I particularly liked this game for how it uses digraphs: ss, ff, ll and so on. Complete words and pictures are displayed alongside and children can see that the same sounds are involved in these words. Then, as with *The Rocket Game*, these are read out loud and the children encouraged to read them themselves.

The icons are very straightforward and restricted to an ear, M and question mark. The M takes you



back to the main menu, while the ear lets you hear the instructions as many times as you want. Still struggling? Then clicking on the question mark launches the spider into giving you the sounds of the letters on screen and other information of what's on the screen. Make a mistake and the program automatically reveals these helpful remarks. The help has been well designed to provide a good balance of constructive criticism and explanation.

Of help to teachers is the manual with some suggestions on using the programs as a basis for whole class, individual and group work. It also suggests which groups of letters to choose initially and how these should be developed.

If a child has just made a clicking error with their mouse, they can correctly click and the explanation stops. With some of my children this meant that they just clicked indiscriminately getting the right answer as quickly as possible but without understanding the task. I like the fact that you can bypass explanations, but it would be nice if this was an option or bypassing has to be done with a keyboard key press rather than a mouse click.

The Big A B C is exactly what you'd expect from the title. Concentrating on the 26 letters of the alphabet and the four consonant digraphs - th, ch, sh, wh - as with the other titles. But here there are 30 alliterative rhyming songs as well as

120 activities; two listening and two spelling pattern activities for each letter. So this is more than just an interactive dictionary or word list.

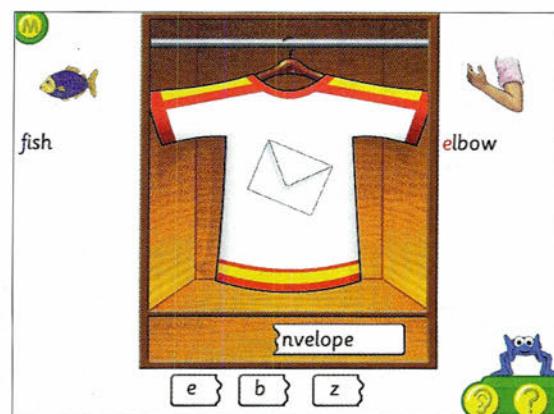
The main menu offers up the letters in lower case format - again teachers can customise volume, type and number of activities, letter case, letter name and sound, onset colour, auto help, automatic music as well as restricting the alphabet and digraphs available to children. Again reporting is available for those who install.

Make your choice and the letter, in the case you've chosen, appears and is introduced as "This letter makes the sound a. It is the letter a" although digraphs only appear as sounds. An alliterative ditty introduces the scene of an excellently detailed and interesting picture containing a large number of objects beginning with the target letter. Webster wants you to find four and for each one you choose an octagon is coloured in. My children went back to this again and again wanting to find all the matches and it led to much discussion about different words for similar objects.

Click the 'next' arrow and you'll move on a page to find the same picture with elements greyed out and another listening task awaiting you. The challenge is to click colour back into the ones with the target letter.

Next come the spelling games. The first of these asks you to label the object in the picture named by the spider. You have four to choose from each time and only one is correct. As with Sound Activities children are encouraged to read the words in the labels for themselves and not just to rely on Webster.

The final game again presents pupils with a labelling activity. Her it is in place on the picture,



however, someone has torn away the first letter/digraph - or end sound if you've chosen x - and mixed them up with three other torn off letters. Click on the right one and the word appears in full.

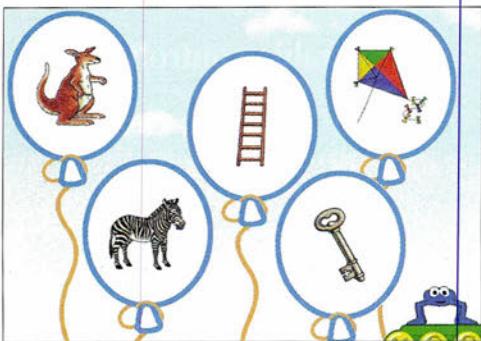
The graphics, sounds and presentation are excellent, activities have been well thought out, not too long to become boring and not too short to be meaningless. The three CD-ROMs in the series support each other extremely well, consolidating knowledge and requiring children to learn just one simple interface. Yet they work well separately whether you use ORT products or not. I hope this series will continue to be developed as it is bright and appealing to children, while it is easily integrated into the Literacy Hour even for children working independently.

END

63

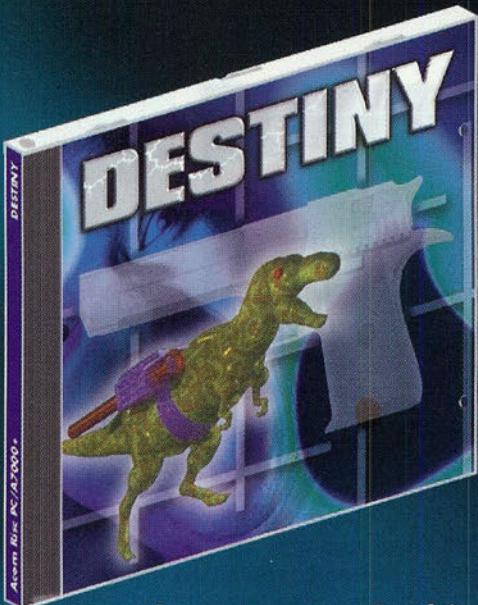
Product details

Product:	Sound Activities
Ages:	5-7
Price:	£35
Product:	Big A B C
Ages:	5-7
Price:	£35
Supplier:	Sherston Software, Angel House, Sherston, Wiltshire SN16 0LH
Tel:	(+44/0) 01666 843200
Fax:	(+44/0) 01666 843216
Web:	www.sherston.com
E-mail:	sales@sherston.co.uk



DESTINY

One of the most talked about Acorn games is available now



Transported to an unknown world you must venture into a dangerous domain. Not only are you searching for power cells so you can return, you have to survive and battle against the evil denizens who are determined to kill you.

Reduced
£10
Subscriber price
£8

“...The weaponry in this game is second to none, and outclasses Quake or Doom by a long way.”

Acorn Arcade

“I would say that it is a good buy for all Risc PC owners”

Acorn Arcade

ORDER YOUR COPY NOW AND HAVE AN EXPLOSIVE YEAR 2000

YES! Please send me ____ copies of *Destiny* @ £10 each

Please send me ____ copies of *Destiny* @ £8 each (subs price)

Name.....

Address.....

Postcode E-mail

I wish to pay by:

Cheque/postal order (payable to Tau Press Ltd)
 Credit Card (No debit cards)

Credit Card No:

Expiry Date: /

Name on card:

Signature:

Postage & Packing

UK postage, add £1 each
Europe, add £2 each
Rest of world, add £3 each

- High resolution 3D graphics
- Huge varied levels
- Serious fire power
- Intelligent enemies
- Original music
- Configurable controls

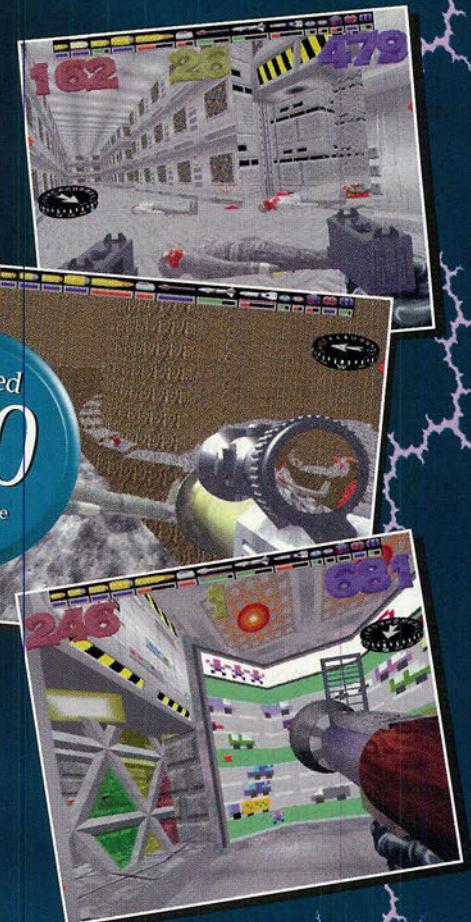
And much more never seen in any other game of this type on any other platform

ORDER FORM

Please tick here if you do not wish to receive promotional information from other companies

Send your order to: Destiny Offer, Tau Press, 26 Stockport Village, Hooper Street, Stockport SK1 1DQ

Playable on A7000+, Risc PC 600 or better. Strong ARM recommended. Requires CD-ROM drive, 10Mb RAM and 13Mb hard disc space minimum. RISC OS 4 patch available



RISC OS

Rambles

Off to a quick start today because we've a great deal to get through and still the same old two pages. Mike Bailey has a hankering to write some multi-computer games:

Q "Can you tell me how to send data between two or more computers via the printer ports (this is RO3.1 on A5000s by the way), that is send numeric or text data out the port of one and have it picked up by the other.

"I've been trying to work it out for yonks by looking in the StrongHelp manuals, other peoples' programs, and a couple books I have, but to no avail. I have a very vague idea on the serial way as there appears to be more info on this but I've no serial cables.

"But I do though have an abundance of parallel cables and I really want to be able to do stuff like write network games and other net utilities, file transfer if possible and need to understand fully the process of printer port 'comms', so please help I'd be really grateful if you could tell me how to do it in BASIC, or what SWIs to use. I have just recently started to understand SWIs, and they're cool."

A I'm sure you will be pleased to know that you don't need to use SWI calls at all. First off, you need to connect the two off, you need to connect the two

cable. Most cables are just one-to-one cables, that is pin one on both ends are connected together with the same going for all the other pins.

This arrangement will not work for you. You need what is known as a twisted cable. This has pin 1 connected to pin 10 and pin 17 connected to pin 11 (that's four twisted wires) and pins 2 - 9 connected to pins 2 - 9 (that's eight straight connections) plus pins 25 connected together. Then one computer pretends to be a printer while the other receives what the other is sending.

The printer port can be accessed directly from BASIC and looks just like a file, you can use all the normal file commands to transfer data between the two machines. On one machine you open the file for output and on the other for input:

```
FO% = OPENOUT "parallel1:  
FI% = OPENIN "parallel1:  
Then you can use the BPUT# and BGET# to transfer bytes or the PRINT# and INPUT# to transfer numbers and strings. One point here is that you must INPUT the same data type as you PRINT or it won't work. Also if you try to INPUT something and there is nothing waiting in the buffer then the computer will hang until something is sent.
```

To avoid this use the length of file function EXT# to see if something is in the buffer before trying to extract it. As one computer is receiving while the other is sending

communication is only one way. However, you can arrange the software to swap the sender and receiver to allow two way communications, this is known as half-duplex working, the sort of computer equivalent of saying 'over' on a walkie-talkie.

You can't connect more than two computers like this because the printer handshaking lines are fixed to be inputs and outputs, they are not configurable. To connect more than two computers together you have to go for a network card in each.

If you want to write real network games – using network interface cards – you could use the version of Justin Fletcher's *JFShared Basic* library that contains support for sockets and network games.

Barrie Ellis is trying to breath new life into an old machine, he writes:

Q "I wonder if you can help me build a universal SCART lead for a BBC Micro. I'm trying to make some to go with a switch interface set-up I'm working on for people with severe disabilities. I'm trying to make it as small as possible as a lot of people have a limited amount of space to keep the machine in many living in small bungalows.

"I've removed the necessity of a disk-drive, by getting Chris Richardson to put the software (YES/NO, dice and a versatile number generator) on RFS

EPROMs, I'm using BBC B's as they are smaller than Masters, and now I'm trying to get rid of the CUB monitors, using the RGB out for a decent colour picture.

"The SCART leads I've built work on some TVs but not all, but won't work on my Maplin extension lead, nor video recorders, though this is not so important, if I could get it to work on the 2- or 5-way extension leads and any TV. I've been told the use of a capacitor may help."

A The problem with this is that not all TVs have RGB inputs on the SCART socket. It is a common misconception that a SCART socket equals an RGB input. That's why your lead will work on some TVs and not others. The TVs that have no RGB use composite video on pin 19 - you can get composite video out of the model B through a socket on the back but

This might be beginning to feel like a soap opera but Gareth is still struggling to understand how computers actually do arithmetic, here is a sample from a recent exchange of e-mails:

Q "I am still having trouble understanding the arithmetic of the computer. I do understand it a lot better than I did before. However, some things I still cannot get straight: To begin with, you said that, to the computer a positive number wouldn't be any different to a negative number. If this is the case, how does it subtract numbers, as it needs a negative number to be able to subtract, doesn't it?"

"Finally, I am intrigued to know how the computer knows which bit in the binary figure represents which decimal number. It is true to say that the computer doesn't work with decimal numbers, but when it outputs the binary numbers on screen, as the result of running a program, it has to output them as decimal for us to understand."

A When does a bit pattern represent a negative number and when is it an unsigned one? Answer whenever you want. It's all the same to the computer. Don't mix up the computer and the computer high level language. Don't confuse the sign of a number, positive or negative, with the operation, add or subtract.

To add up two bit-patterns the computer puts them through an adder circuit. To subtract two numbers the computer takes the 2's complement (invert all the bits then add 1) of the subtractand and then puts them through an adder circuit.

In this way it doesn't matter if the number you are subtracting (or adding) is positive or negative you will get the right result. Try doing this on paper with some examples numbers, use 4-bit numbers for ease.

unfortunately it is only mono.

You can modify the computer to produce a colour composite signal and that does involve adding a capacitor. If you look on most of our past cover CDs you will see the old Acorn application notes, the last time they appeared was on AUCD8 in **Acorn.FTP.Documents.Appnotes**, that's Application Note 1. The only problem with adding a composite signal to the SCART is that some TVs then will use the composite signal instead of the RGB one.

It's the function switch on pin 8 that needs to be taken to +12 volts to indicate there is RGB present, this also might explain why it doesn't work on some TVs you have tested. Some sets will happily switch with just 5V to this pin but strictly speaking this voltage indicates the TV is to go into wide screen mode.

The problem here is that the SCART standard has been poorly or incompletely implemented on

virtually all TV sets. I have covered this in the past in *Acorn Computing*, see BodyBuilding 86 (Oct. 90) "Connect your computer to a TV set using its SCART plug."

Anyway Barrie send me a reply:

T "Thanks Mike, you've helped me make my mind up on what to do - I've recently been given the info on how to get a colour composite picture out of the BNC b/w output.

So I'll modify the BBC Micros I donate to either a colour signal to RCA TV input, use the RGB SCART where I know it will work, the ideal, or failing all that, give people a CUB Monitor, which are not exactly compact anymore."

Contacting AU

Mike Cook:
rambles@acornuser.com

The computer doesn't know about positive and negative numbers, the beauty of the 2's complement method of representing negative numbers is that the computer doesn't have to know.

So the binary 1101 can represent 13 if you interpret the bit pattern as a 4-bit unsigned number. However, as a 4-bit 2's complement number this same bit pattern stands for -3. The operation (say add) is the same no matter what interpretation you put on it. Remember a computer only handles bit patterns and not numbers. It's only when we want to manipulate numbers that we interpret bit patterns as numbers.

As for the other part of your question: The high level language PRINT statement contains a program that takes a bit pattern and produces an ASCII string which is the decimal representation of that bit pattern. It's only a bit of cosmetic manipulation, it doesn't actually mean anything, it's only when we see this string that we see it as a number.

One way (and it's only one way) of doing this would be to convert the bit pattern into a BCD bit pattern (Binary Coded Decimal) this is four bits representing each decimal digit of the number. This involves doing some BCD-based adding, that is adding up numbers four bits at a time and generating carries and roll-overs when this number exceeds nine.

The algorithm is a bit complex to describe here but it involves shifting and adding, most standard text books should explain this. To convert a BCD number into ASCII is simple, just add hex 30 to all the bits, remember ASCII &34 prints out as 4 and ASCII &32 prints out as 2 and so on. The exact relationship between the bit pattern and the number output depends on the way the language is representing numbers - which in Basic could be either 4-byte integers or 5-byte floating point numbers.

textease®

WORKING
TOGETHER
TO MEET
ALL OUR
EDUCATIONAL
NEEDS



textease®
2000

textease®
PRIMARY

textease®
SPREADSHEET

textease®



Database

textease®
LANGUAGE PACKS

SoftEase®

SoftEase Ltd, Market Place, Ashbourne, Derbyshire, DE6 1ES

Tel: +44 (0)1335 343421 Fax: +44 (0)1335 343422 email: sales@softEase.co.uk Web Site: www.textease.com

Subscribe to The world's number 1 RISC OS magazine **ACORNUSER**

You already know what a great magazine *Acorn User* is – it's the only place you can get accurate, rumour-free, detailed RISC OS news, in-depth hardware and software reviews, and without doubt the best cover discs available.

Take out a subscription today and you guarantee never to miss an issue of the biggest and best RISC OS magazine in the world – at a lower price than you can get in the shops.

Subscribe now!

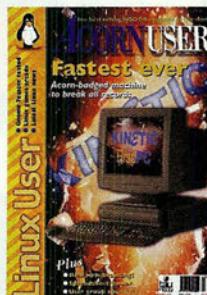
back issues

Missed out on one of our previous issues? Take this opportunity to bring your collection up to date. But hurry – stocks are limited.

Call our
Subscription Hotline
Tel: 0161 429 8902
Fax: 0161 429 0685

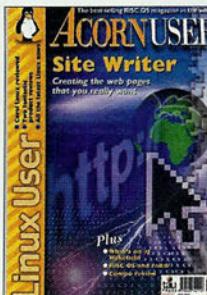
e-mail: subscrip@acornuser.com
Please quote code 'A0008' when
subscribing by phone or e-mail

To receive the September *Acorn User* (issue 224) all subscriptions must be in by Tuesday 18 July. Subscriptions received after this date will start with the October *Acorn User* (issue 225).



Issue 223
July 2000

- KINETIC card review
- Oregano web browser review
- User groups revisited
- Textease Spreadsheet



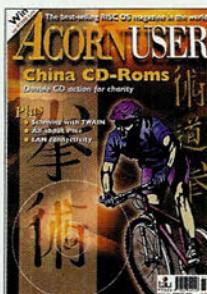
Issue 221
June 2000

- Site Writer review
- Web Wizard reviewed
- RISC OS on radar
- Chaos engine reviewed



Issue 218
March 2000

- Imago explained
- All about PCA
- MP3 on RISC OS
- Tidal Art
- Ten things you can do with a digital camera



Issue 217
February 2000

- Cover CD-Rom
- Charity CD-Roms
- Using TWAIN
- LAN connectivity
- All about Pace

100
of games
is issue's CD

The best-selling RISC OS magazine in the world

ACORNUSER

Get netted

What you need to make
the most of the Web

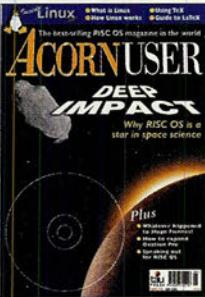
RISCOS Ltd
Read the truth inside

email
internet
com

Plus

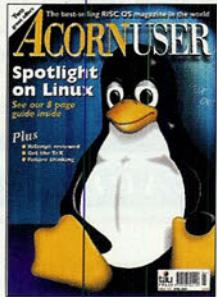
- Netplex reviewed
- New Web plug-ins
- Going faster with the K

If you would like a copy of the current issue you can order it directly from us:
Current issue prices
UK £4.80 Europe £5.30
World £6.90



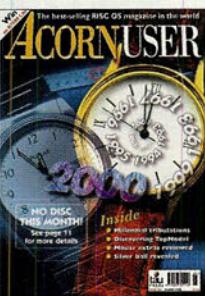
Issue 220 May 2000

- RISC OS asteroids
- Brilliant cover CD with TeX & Linux
- What happened to Hugo Ffenn?
- How to expand Ovation Pro



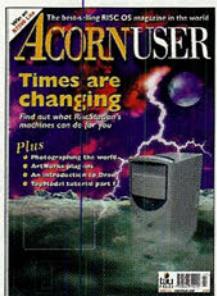
Issue 219 April 2000

- Linux special
- RiScript reviewed
- Getting into TeX
- Interesting Futures
- More TopModel & Draw tutorials



Issue 216 January 2000

- Learn to use TopModel 2
- Effects of the Millennium Bug
- Removable storage reviewed
- Online with mailing lists



Issue 215 Xmas 1999

- RiscStation hardware reviewed
- Win an R7500 Lite
- Digital projectors reviewed
- LinuxFS checked out

Please send me the following subscription/back issues:

Please subscribe me for:

Annual subscription (13 issues)

	New	Renewal	
UK	AUN0008Y	AUR0008Y	£45.99
EU	AEN0008Y	AER0008Y	£51.99
World	AWN0008Y	AWR0008Y	£63.99

8-issue subscription

	New	Renewal	
UK	AUN00088	AUR00088	£29.99
EU	AEN00088	AER00088	£34.99
World	AWN00088	AWR00088	£40.99

4-issue subscription

	New	Renewal	
UK	AUN00084	AUR00084	£15.99
EU	AEN00084	AER00084	£17.99
World	AWN00084	AWR00084	£20.99

Please send me the following back issues:

UK Europe World

<input type="checkbox"/> Issue 222, July 2000	£4.20	£4.70	£6.30
<input type="checkbox"/> Issue 221, June 2000	£4.20	£4.70	£6.30
<input type="checkbox"/> Issue 220, May 2000	£4.20	£4.70	£6.30
<input type="checkbox"/> Issue 219, Apr 2000	£4.20	£4.70	£6.30
<input type="checkbox"/> Issue 218, Mar 2000	£4.20	£4.70	£6.30
<input type="checkbox"/> Issue 217, Feb 2000	£4.20	£4.70	£6.30
<input type="checkbox"/> Issue 216, Jan 2000	£4.20	£4.70	£6.30
<input type="checkbox"/> Issue 215, Xmas 1999	£4.20	£4.70	£6.30

SOLD OUT

Any 2 back issues: UK £7.40 Europe £8.05 World £11.15

Any 3 back issues: UK £9.60 Europe £10.55 World £15.20

I wish to pay by:

Cheque/postal order (payable to Tau Press Ltd)

Credit Card (Visa/Mastercard)

Credit Card No:

Expiry Date: / Prices include postage & packing

Name on card:

Signature:

All credit card transactions will be under the name Powertrack International

Name:

Address:

..... Country:

Postcode:

E-mail:

Send your completed Acorn User
subscription/back issues form to:

Acorn User, Tau Press, 26 Stockport Village,
Hooper Street, Stockport, Cheshire SK1 1DQ

Telephone 0161 429 8902 or fax your completed
Acorn User subscription/back issues form with
credit card details to

0161 429 0685

Have a query? E-mail subscript@acornuser.com

Please note e-mail is not secure, we do not recommend
sending your order details as plain text though you can
scan a signed form and send it compressed by e-mail.

Please tick here if you do not wish to receive
promotional information from other companies

ADVERTISERS' INDEX

Abel VISP	Linux News	8	Genesys	26
AJS		51	Levens	14
Aleph 1	Linux News	37	Liquid Silicon	29
APDL		30	PHR	43
Argonet		11	Pineapple Software	51
City Audio Services		43	ProAction	52
Cannon/Cumana		25	R-Comp	53, 70
Castle Technology	IFC, OBC		Reflex	16
CJE	20, 70		RISCOS Ltd	12
Clares Micro Supplies		26	RiscStation	19
Co Comp		51	Softseas	67
CTA	4-5, 71		South East Show	26
Cyberos		44	Spacetech	IBC, 70
David Snell		71	STD	29
Davyn		71	Surftec	9
Desktop Projects		71	Wardlaw Surveys	71
Esox		43	What Is Scn? Exhibition Tour Dates	59
EFF		44		

WILTSHIRE



Your Acorn Approved Specialist
with Teaching Experience

Educational Consultancy Training and Support
Acorn Computer Supply and Installation
Software Upgrades and Repairs

Tel - 01225 764863
Fax - 01225 350860

email itscon@argonet.co.uk

CUMBRIA

Cumbria Software Systems



All things RISC OS in the
North of England and
Scottish Borders



Tel: 01697 73779

Unit 3A, Tounfoot Ind. Est, Brampton, Cumbria CA8 1SW

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE



plus
CD ROM &
Hard Disc
from just
£12.99

RiscStation Lite, Networx, Mico and
RiscPC dealer for Nottinghamshire,
Derbyshire and Leicestershire

see our website at

www.levens-software.co.uk

or contact freephone

08000 191 242

To advertise in

ACORNUSER

call Advertising

on

0161 429 8902

SUSSEX

- Hardware
- Software
- Installation
- Repairs



78 Brighton Road
Worthing
West Sussex
BN11 2EN

Open 6 days a week
With demonstrations available

sales@cje.co.uk
<http://www.cje.co.uk/>

DORSET

spacetech imaging technology

- Photodesk
- TopModel
- OHP
- Digital cameras
- Tutorial CD-ROMs
- Photoreal printer drivers



1 The Courtyard, Southwell Business Park, Portland, Dorset DT5 2NQ
Tel: (+44/0) 1305 822753 Fax: (+44/0) 1305 860483
E-mail: sales@spacetech.co.uk Web: www.spacetech.co.uk

SOFTWARE



Registered

Developer

Authorised

Installer



The RISC OS hardware/software specialists

Internet: Web/Email/Networking

Music, Multimedia, Systems and More...

22 Robert Moffat, High Legh, Knutsford, Cheshire WA16 6PS

Tel: 01925 755043 Fax: 01925 757377

rcl@rcomp.co.uk

NORTH WEST

Desktop Projects Ltd

4 Clock Tower Close,
Millgreen Park, Hyde,
Cheshire SK14 1RS

Tel: 0845 4580778

For all your RISC OS
and networking needs.

Visitors by appointment only please

Authorised Acorn Dealer & Centre of Technology

Desktop Projects Ltd

Tel: 0845 4580778 Web: www.deskopp.demon.co.uk
E-mail: info@deskopp.demon.co.uk



NORTH WEST

Tel: +44 (0) 1942 797777

RISCStation

Risc Based Technologies

For details of the next generation
in RISC OS computing, call now,
or visit your local dealer

HIGHLANDS

Wardlaw Surveys

Authorised Acorn Dealer;
for all your needs from supply,
service, repair and full after-sales.

**Wardlaw House, Kirkhill,
Inverness IV5 7NB**
Tel/Fax: 01463 831214

NORTH WEST



Acorn Dealer and RiscOS Centre of Excellence

Acorn Spares and Repairs

All Acorn Machines available on 0% finance

Installation, Networking
Repairs on a no-fix
no-fee basis.

Tel. 01942 797777

168 Elliott St.
Tyldesley
Gtr. Manchester
M29 8DS

See Main Advert on
Pages 4 & 5

Fax 01942 797711

LONDON

ROUGOL

RISC OS User Group of London

FREE MEMBERSHIP

to the largest group of
RISC OS Users in the UK

- * Come and meet local dealers, developers, enthusiasts and many beer drinkers!
- * A wide range of events held at various London locations
- * Organisers of the RISC OS Education mailing list
- * Free membership to the fastest growing group of RISC OS users
- * Join, and be kept informed

Sponsored by



www.cumana.net

for all your RISC OS requirements

For further information on joining visit
www.rougol.jellybaby.net

or write to

Flat 5, 19 Normanton Road,
South Croydon, Surrey CR2 7JU
Tel: 07785 935 497



Association of Acorn Usergroups

EXETER

ProCAD+

The Professional Choice

(Reviewed in Acorn User May 1999)

£25 off SPECIAL MILLENNIUM OFFER

A FREE demonstration copy of the latest ProCAD+ can be obtained from the web site or by telephoning the number shown below.

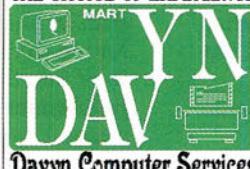
To claim your 10% Acorn User discount simply quote AU2K when placing your order. Offer extended to 30th September 2000.

Telephone now for details: 01392 214033

E-mail: dsnell@mail.zynet.co.uk Web site: <http://www.zynet.co.uk/dsnell>

West Yorkshire

THE CHOICE OF EXPERIENCE



Davyn Computer Services

Printers, Ribbons, Ink Cartridges,

Refills

Expert Advice & After Sales Service

Mail Order Master Card, Visa, Switch

Ring for Prices

Service & Repair to all Equipment

Full Range of Acorn Hardware & Software

(We operate the Acorn Finance Schemes)

Full Range of Educational Software

Tel. 01924 254800 Fax. 01924 258036

e-mail sales@davyn.demon.co.uk

Acorn

Pocket Book II

RISC PC

hp

HEWLETT

PACKARD

CITIZEN

Canon

For the best service in Yorkshire

(we think)

CALL US! for A7000, RiscPC & Pocket Book II

Visit our Showroom

Open 9.30 to 5.30

Mon, Tues, Weds, Sat.

9.30 to 7.30

Thurs & Fri.



Leeds & Bradford
M1 Junction 41

Stanley
Town Centre

Huddersfield
Dewsbury, Bailey
M1 Junction 40

Castleford
Benton
Benton Trinity

Wetherby
Tadcaster

Adel
Bingley

Bingley
Birstall

Brighouse
Denby Dale

M1 Junction 39

Castleside
Normanton
M1 Junction 31

How to find us

WE ARE HERE
The 'Workshop'
off Princess Street

Sandal
Wakefield
WF1 5NY

STEVENAGE

Reflex

Electronics

Extended Warranty
Original Spares
Technical Support
Repairs



Reflex Electronics Ltd, Unit 17 Gunnels Wood Park
Gunnels Wood Road, Stevenage, Herts. SG1 2BH
Tel: 01438 311299 Fax 01438 311286
<http://www.reflexelectronics.co.uk>

Why can't the programmers

One of the things which annoyed me most about Acorn (as was) was the fact that they would complete the software so that it looked about 95% done and leave the tidying up to the likes of developers and PD programmers. Acorn have gone and I'm glad to say that since upgrading to OS 4, it doesn't look like RISCOS Ltd have done the same.

It seems sad though that software writers have taken up this 95% approach. Take possibly the three best pieces of software available at the moment - *POPStar*, *Socketeer* and *StrongED* (these are representative - I could go on and on with examples). For those who are not technical, we are expected to place bits and pieces of the software in the *!Boot* structure and write our own configuration

system. While this may not be daunting to experienced users, new users will be daunted by this.

How much extra effort would it take to see programmers adding little bits into their software to do this for us? I mean, would it take much more than 20 lines of code to ask the user for log-in details or install a part of itself into the boot? Not being a programmer, I could not say, but I doubt it would take very much to issue a *copy command and a few inputs.

Can I therefore make a plea to all PD/Shareware/Commercial programmers, think down a notch or two and include an installer.

Bethany Richards
by e-mail

Matthew Sackman replies on this and

other related issues: Installers are only of benefit when they work. The major problem is that due to a variety of !Boot sequences in circulation, there are no hard-and-fast rules and no guarantees that an installer would place the files in the correct place for your system. Therefore most programmers assume that a user is capable of knowing how their own system works and how to configure it.

Due to the intuitive nature of RISC OS, it is extremely easy to learn how to use. Any major features (such as the 'Menu on the Middle Mouse button') are implemented as a standard throughout the OS and programs are written to be integral to this.

As a result, the gap in knowledge base between programmers and users is huge: Programmers must slog through several thousand pages of PRMs and then any further guides they need to read; then they actually sit down, think and design their application; and then they write it. Thus the programmer knows the exact code for every feature in their application intrinsically and so it is very easy to think, as a programmer, that all users out there would find this particular feature equally easy to use and understand.

Documentation is often considered as the boring bit of programming and in many cases, unless one takes great effort and puts pride in achieving a clear and concise manual, it will turn out a dog's dinner! It is very easy to get bored writing a manual and then wander off and add a couple of extra features to

Game problem

I was wondering if you could help me with a game I have, the game is Premier Manager which I am running on an A3010 1MB machine. While playing the game it will crash with an error message of (Fatal error Type=5), this error is not listed in the reference manual.

The game is by Gremlin Interactive which were bought by the French software group Infogrammes so I have not been able to get any information from them as to the cause of the bug.

I have looked around for information on the internet as to what this is, some people say it's an error which is only generated by a program written in C, is this true and if so is there any bug fixes.

Other people said it was the program trying to access a memory location that it didn't have access to and that there isn't anyway of fixing this. The correct information would be much appreciated.

Andrew Simpson
by e-mail

These damned grammers...

your programme – anything to get out of having to write the manual!

Installers are slightly different: I once issued an update patch as a directory of files and instructions on what to do. Around 1 in 10 users got it right first time; although the instructions were clear to me, they obviously weren't to others. Since then I have always included an installer that searches for previous versions and updates them as necessary.

I would therefore suggest that programmers are not the most suitable people to write manuals at all. A programmer will understand his programme on a fundamental level and will never cause his own programme to crash as he knows exactly how to use it.

This level of understanding is not required by users and I would imagine that a better manual would result from great collaboration between the programmer and a few core beta-tester type users. This does take time, but is ultimately beneficial as it often prompts removal of some useless features, the addition of new ones, and an application that is both easier to use and more useful.

Help my world

I have been receiving your mag for a number of years and just wish to say thank you for carrying on when things got tough. Enough said!

I am a parent governor and ICT co-ordinator at a primary school and have a couple of Acorns at home. My wife is a teacher also at the school

and uses Acorns in her class – likewise for the rest of the Key Stage 1. With her input and my love of Draw and MyWorld, we have developed many sets of My World screens which are now used across the KS1 classes.

These include Arrow Numbers, Numberlines, Numbers Sets, Sentence (1st 45 words), Long Vowels, Initial Sounds, Rhyme and a topic based – The Sea. I have also produced a simple geography set of screens for the Isle of Wight which enables the children to visit their classroom from a school plan.

I have been told that it is possible for these screens to be transferred successfully to a PC and, as our KS2 classes have a meagre range of MyWorld screens to use, I am interested in trying to transfer some of my screens over. Is it at all possible to run an article on this or feed this letter out to the Acorn world for help. It is interesting that MyWorld has been accepted by the PC world as an original brilliant educational concept that they even wish to copy it.

In response to Graham Wootten's letter, (June 2000), DK did indeed have Acorn converters for their CD-ROMs produced by IMS, now Interconnex; I have one for 'The Way Things Work' CD-ROM. A PC to Acorn reader is used.

Dave Bryant
jadabry@supanet.com

Viewpoint

As someone who only recently joined the RISC OS world as the MD of Tau Press, I have come to appreciate the good and bad points of this market. But I was horrified to discover that some so-called members of the RISC OS community had been falsely rumour-mongering and that this had found its way onto the Internet as a kind of Sun-style "reporting".

Perhaps those concerned should think more about the kind of damage they can cause that affects the livelihood of people, the RISC OS market and even the UK in general. As opposed to puffing up their own petty pride and self-importance.

Who knows what possesses people to behave in such an unthinking manner – luckily they are only the few, and we are the many.

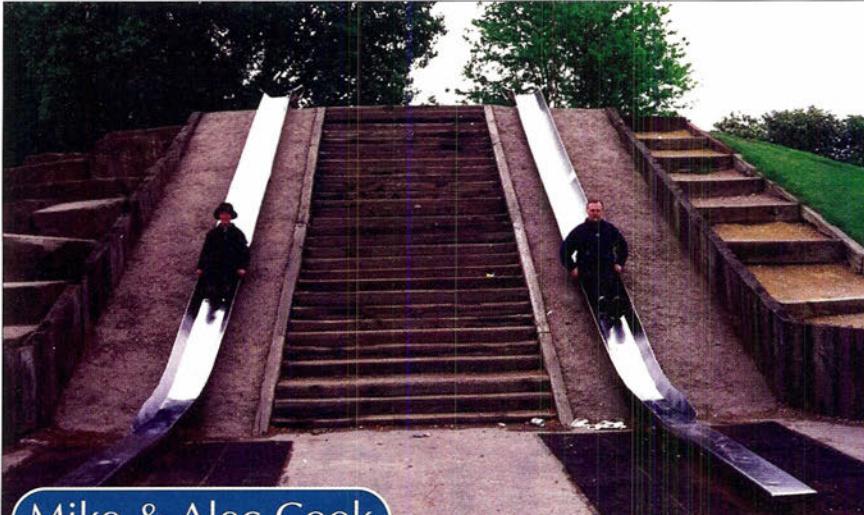
Let's not forget that this market has a lot to offer, and most of the people here want it to succeed – so don't listen to the negatives. Let's talk positive and get pro-active.

Sharon Henderson

73

Contacting AU

Letters:
letters@acornuser.com



Mike & Alec Cook

Mike and Alec Cook were virtually the first people I saw at the show. Seeing them on the *Acorn User* stand, I thought 'Oh look, its Dr Evil and Mini Me!' Just in case Mike Cook needs further introduction, he writes *Rambles and Run the Risc* every month in *Acorn User*.

Mike (who likes 'hill walking' in Switzerland and would quite like to hang glide except that he's petrified of heights) is the only person I've met who could successfully continue *Home Truths* if John Peel were ever to hang up his slippers.

'I was writing on the wall of my cave and someone said this could be a good idea,' jokes Mike about his first experiences with Acorn machines. 'I got an Acorn Atom at work - Manchester Poly as it was then. In those days you could buy Acorn computers in kits and we were designing a course to show teachers how to make an Acorn Atom and then teach them how to "use" it. But the academic powers that be decided that teachers were not clever enough to do this and did not let us run the course. In the end we actually ran the course for members of the general public.'

'I got 25 computers working before the Christmas of the first term. Some of them worked first time; most of them did not, and I did it by working late. When the BBC Model A came out I built a few of those, and did conversions to Model Bs.'

'Ever since I can remember,' Alec adds, 'I had a deprived childhood sitting programming Basic on a BBC at the age of three years old. I have been using computers ever since, and I kind of got into music, and now I am off to university to do music technology with computers and stuff at Leeds Met.'

Mike and Alec are father and son, but it's hard to believe that when you meet them;

there seems no age difference when you talk to them and their relationship seems that of best mates, of equals. They are both heavily into music. It came as no surprise to find out that Mike used to play folk guitar - with that beard what else could he have played?

'But I did not have a beard then!' protests Mike.

Alec adds: 'I am in two bands: my college band which is more jazz-based and a rock band. Well I *might* be in a rock band, I *might* have left. The last gig I played was supporting JJ72, and the week after JJ72 we were supporting Brace at Blackpool, so you know it is only step away from supporting Brace.'

'I do rock and roll; Wendy my wife does a music fanzine,' says Mike. 'I help a little and so do several students and it is called *This is not TV*. It's sort of done on a Risc PC.'

'I listened to folk in the 60s, got married in the 70s, had children in the 80s. In the mid-nineties I started to listen to music again. You forget about music and you think it is all rubbish, but when Alec started getting into it, I thought "this is all right". I liked Radiohead, a little of brit pop but, significantly, not dad rock.'

Alec now knows lots of bands thanks to his mum who has a habit of waltzing backstage past all the security guards who never stop her because they think she is the band's mum. He has stories about hanging out with Travis, Placebo and Radiohead, and the first time he got drunk, Martin Karr from The Boo Radleys was buying the beer.

'My hangover lasted a week,' explained Alec. 'But we have run out of up-and-coming good bands. We are now into unsigned bands on the cusp of being signed or dropping into obscurity - indie rock is a very small world.'

Mike currently designs set-top boxes for Pace, having been a physics lecturer at MMU and an electronic engineer. A teacher put him in touch with an 'unknown' magazine and Mike offered to write a two-part article on converting Model As to Bs and a couple of others on interfacing things ... over 200 of these later and Mike is still going strong.

'The first time I did copy, Alec had just learnt to walk. He is going to university this year. RISC OS machines are great; they are stable, easy to use and have small footprints. They are very easy to program and you can get them to do just what you want them to do. In my case, I basically want to mess about with interfaces and electronics'.

I do rock
and roll,
and Wendy
does the
fanzine

spacetech

imaging technology

news

New Olympus C3030 ZOOM

Super Olympus camera with 3Mpix CCD integrated optical and digital zoom, Quicktime movie and sound feature, 2048x1536 resolution with 15 options!

PHOTODESK 3 is the package which defines studio quality image editing and artwork on RISC OS machines. It is easy to use but has many powerful features, including LAYERS and a sophisticated colour management system (CMS) for the full-time graphics professional.

£299.50

PHOTODESK2 is still available, retaining the CMS but not layers.

£199.00

PHOTODESK LIGHT, an economic alternative to PHOTODESK3 retains most of its creative features apart from the Colour Management System, Layers and some features essential to the professional user. £134.75 Plug-in Effects Packs are available for all Photodesk packages. Each pack contains 10 special effects.

£19.95

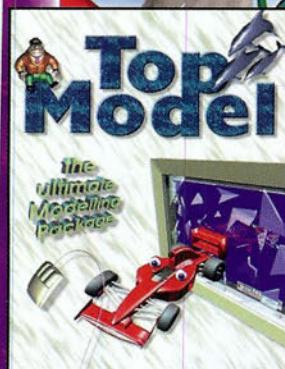
Spacetech tutorial CD ROMs:

"An Introduction to Digital Art" featuring bitmap and vector graphics tutorials by the well-known artist, David Cowell. This is a fascinating introduction to studio quality graphics work on CD ROM for **£24.95**

A NEW CD from David is now available: "Creative Digital Imaging" This contains a resource of images and covers the following topics in greater detail: Digital painting, Painting with Texture, Digital Photography, Photo illustration, Montage, Portraits, Words and Text, Creative masking, Hints and Tips.

£24.95

Digisnaps: A library of over 100 high quality digital photographs from David Cowell. **£12.95**



TopModel2 V.2.14 is now available for **£152.75**. Existing users may upgrade for **£29.95** or buy the NEW CD-ROM packed with resources, the new plug-in Top3DFonts! and a free 2.14 upgrade for only **£58.63**. TopModel 2 is the definitive 3D modelling package for RISC OS.



A presentation package on CD-ROM from Spacetech

Makes your slide shows quick and easy to create!

- Start building your presentation 5 minutes before the lesson? – No Problem
- Use your existing work in a presentation? – No Problem, just drag 'n drop it in!

OHP2 now available on CD-ROM. Many new features including Sound and Export.

£39.95

(Upgrade from OHP v.1.xx **£12.95**)



PhotoLink is an Acorn multi-driver for the most popular makes of digital camera. It is bundled FREE* with the following cameras:

C860L 1280x960 resolution, TFT screen, macro, 2x digital Tele Mode **Our price £299.99**
C960ZOOM 1280x960, 3xoptical zoom, replacement for C920Z **Our price £399.99**
C2020 ZOOM 1600x1200 optical zoom, has everything including manual override for auto settings, remote control. Records bursts of quicktime! **Our price £549.99**
C3030 ZOOM 2048x1536 optical zoom. TRUE 3 Megapixel resolution (not interpolated) has everything including sound and quicktime movie. **Our price £799.99**

*PhotoLink is available free with cameras purchased from Spacetech, or on its own, if you have purchased your camera elsewhere, at **£69.00**

PhotoReal is the Acorn driver extension for the Canon BJC4300, BJC4650, BJC7000, BJC 7100 BJC2000, Epson Photo, Photo700, Photo750 and Photo1200 printers with photo-realistic capability. PhotoReal makes use of the same advanced techniques for producing high-quality four-colour separations as Photodesk and comes ready calibrated for the special dye-based inks used for photo-realistic printing. A calibration application is also supplied to allow you to tailor the results to your own specification.

Driver only **£69.00** inc. VAT. or FREE if purchased with printer!

Examples: Canon BJC2000 **£149.95**
Epson Photo750 **£209.95**

Epson Photo1200 A3 **£399.99**
BJC7100 **£299.00**

(all prices include PhotoReal Driver) Ask us to mail you a sample printout!

spacetech
imaging technology

All prices include VAT

1 The Courtyard, Southwell Business Park, Portland, Dorset DT5 2NQ, UK

Telephone: +44 (0)1305 822753 Fax: +44 (0)1305 860483

Email: sales@spacetech.co.uk Web: <http://www.spacetech.co.uk>



CASTLE

Acorn

an *Explosion* of speed the NEW **KINETIC RiscPC**

ORDER NOW!

Call 01728 723200

Freefax 0800 783 9638

Full details at .

www.castle.org.uk/

Delivery £11 (£12.93 inc. vat) per system.

Castle Technology Ltd, Ore Trading Estate,
Woodbridge Road, Framlingham, Suffolk IP13 9LL, UK
email: sales@castle.org.uk <http://www.castle.org.uk>
E&OE



**Now with SDRAM
– up to 4 times
faster!**

(Limited duration offer)

KINETIC upgrade card
also available for existing RiscPCs

SPECIAL OFFER! 64MB of SDRAM FREE with each upgrade!*

KINETIC UPGRADE CARD.

A plug-in upgrade for all existing RiscPC computers.

£399 (£468.83 inc VAT)

Trade-up scheme 1

Upgrade from RISC OS 4 + StrongARM to KINETIC

£299 (£351.33 inc VAT)

Trade-up scheme 2

Upgrade from RISC OS 4 to KINETIC

£349 (£410.08 inc VAT)

Trade-up scheme 3

Upgrade from StrongARM and RISC OS 3.7 to KINETIC

£349 (£410.08 inc VAT)

128Mb VERSIONS

EXTRA £69 (£81.08 inc VAT)

TRADE-UP NOTES: 1. Payment by credit or debit cards only (or use official authorised orders). 2. Your StrongARM card and/or RISC OS 4 chips must be returned to Castle in serviceable order, by recorded delivery and at your expense, within 2 weeks (or full price of £475.88 will be chargeable). Resellers should contact Castle direct for further information.